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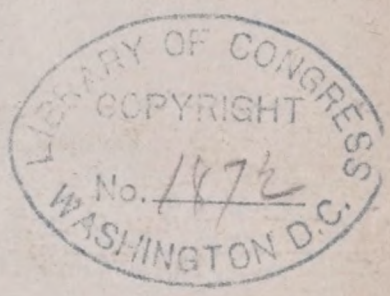
MARIE'S MISTAKE.

A WOMAN'S HISTORY.

by Agnese M. C. Massena

BY CREOLE.



"The intent, and not the deed,
Is in our power; therefore, who dares greatly,
Does greatly."—BROWN'S BARBOROSSA.

"I dare all that becomes woman;
She who does more, is none."
—ABBREVIATION OF SHAKESPEARE.

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MARIE'S MISTAKE.

CHAPTER I.

Oh! give me back the sunny smile
  Of childhood's happy days,
Ere my unwearied feet had learned
  To tread life's wildering maze.
Yes; give me back that smile of joy,
That sinless smile without alloy.

And once again, oh! give me back
  My happy, careless heart;
A heart which never had been pierced
  By sin's envenomed dart;
A heart untainted, free from sin,
And sweet untroubled peace within.

'Tis vain! such wishes all are vain!
  Those days can come no more!
They have passed adown time's rolling wave
  To dark oblivion's shore.
Though past in memory still they dwell,
And cheer me with their magic spell.

Those days so sweet can ne'er again
  Illume with radiance bright,
The heart which once has sorrow known
  Can never more be light.
No; life's bright morning sun has passed,
And o'er my brow a shade has cast.

SAY, Uncle Jim, I am going with you after the cattle, so, just put a bridle on Old Grey; you need not get a saddle, I do not want one; but hurry, for

if they miss me at the house, I will not get to go. There, that will do."

And the speaker, a young girl of perhaps thirteen or fourteen years of age, but so very small and slight in appearance that a stranger would have taken her to be much younger, led the horse to a log that was used as a step in entering the huge barn, and with the quickness and agility of a young monkey, sprang upon the horse's back.

It would be impossible to give the reader a very correct idea of the appearance of Marie Lafourche at the time we introduce her to our readers. Small, slight in figure; black eyes; straight black hair, and so long, it descended to her knees, and was worn just now in two long braids, which hung down her back; her complexion, naturally dark, by being constantly exposed to the sun and wind, was almost as dark as a gipsy's, but the brilliant color that ever flushed her cheek relieved it from sallowness. Every emotion, either of love, joy, or hate, could be read in a moment in the bright eyes. Although her face was not exactly

beautiful, it was, as a mirror, reflecting every emotion of that young, untamable, passionate heart. Although many a fair belle may be shocked at my poor taste, yet I assert, that, notwithstanding her sunburnt, gipsy complexion, irregular features, and straight black hair, Marie Lafourche was beautiful. Yes, little gipsy, nature's child! The very nobility of thy generous, passionate nature, mirrored in that bright young face, rendered your claims to beauty far stronger than a fashionable belle, with all her arts and graces. And a person could not look into those large dark eyes without feeling they were the mirrors of a noble, generous heart.

But we must not just now leave our tiny heroine seated upon the horse, while we give a longer description of her.

"I say, Uncle Jim, come on, quick. We will get off before that tiresome mammy Eda misses me."

But, just at that moment, a negro woman came running into the yard almost out of breath. "You, Miss Marie," exclaimed the

old woman; "you must not even tink going off dat way, nohow. If young miss want de exercise of ridin' hossback, she must have a ridin' habit and saddle and proper company. Now, chile, don't 'tempt to go dat way. An' den, dey is 'specting company at the house; an' you is not fit to be seen. Come back dis minute, chile, an' let me fix your har, and put on 'nodder dress on you; and do try to 'have yourself little mo' proper like."

"Now, I hope you are through, mammy; for Uncle Jim and I must be going. Just please, mammy, go back to the house. I can take care of myself; and then, you see, I am compelled to go and see about my cattle; they could not be brought home without my being along; could they, Uncle Jim?" And with a gay nod of the head to the old woman, she gave the reins of her bridle a jerk, and galloped off down the road. With a laugh at the discomfiture of the old nurse, Jim followed, well pleased to have the girl's company, for she was the idol of every negro on the plantation.

"What is the matter, Eda? What has your

little mistress been doing now?" laughingly asked a young man who entered the barn-yard a few minutes after Marie and Jim rode off, and seeing Eda gazing down the road after them.

"Oh, nothin' new, Massa Tonie; only dat chile's goin' to destruction, ef old massa don't make her 'have herself better. Why, here, she most young lady; an' dere she go, galloping after de cows widout any saddle, her hair all down her back, jes like wild Injun!"

"Never mind, aunt; she will get more dignified as she gets older."

With many shakes of the head, as if she had little faith in the young man's hopes of improvement in her young mistress, old Eda returned to the house. Antoine Lafourche was a cousin to Marie, and many years her senior. He resembled her in many respects; the same dark eyes, broad, low forehead and black hair, he also possessed *en fac-simile*. He seated himself upon the step of the barn after the old nurse had returned to the house, and fell to musing. His thoughts could not have been of

a very pleasant character, if we might judge from the expression of his countenance.

"Yes," he soliloquized, "I fear Aunt Eda is right; we have encouraged Marie in her wild gypsy propensities; it is, indeed, time she learned to be more dignified, for if my mother and father were to die, I do not know what I should do with her. Sister Camille has no patience with her. Now, if she was not a relative, I suppose I could marry her after her education is completed; but as it is, our Holy Church forbids the marriage of relatives; so that is impossible. But it will be so hard to see my little gypsy given to another.

"But I must be dreaming, for, yonder comes my old friend, Captain Luzerne;" and before Antoine Lafourche could leave his seat on the log upon which he had been sitting, a gentleman galloped into the yard.

The captain burst into a torrent of excited exclamations about a little hussy he had just met.

For a moment an angry flush mounted to the brow of Antoine Lafourche — it was but for an instant, for he knew Captain Luzerne little dreamed of whom he was speaking; he therefore calmly replied:

"Why, Captain, you run on so at random, how am I to tell who you are talking about?"

"Well, then, I will be sensible, and relate my adventure of the evening. About half a mile from this place, as I was dashing along the road, I came up with an old negro man and a young girl, who were driving cattle. I did not fancy keeping pace with them, so I attempted to pass, and was ordered very peremptorily by the girl not to do so, as I would frighten her cattle. As I am not accustomed to obeying orders, especially orders emanating from feminines, I did not obey her; but if ever poor mortal run the gauntlet, I did so, for so far as threats and invectives were concerned, and in winding up her torrent of abuse, the little one said if she ever came across me again, she would scratch my eyes out, and

I suppose I may prepare for that very painful operation, as I see them coming. But do tell me who she is, for I am half in love with her in spite of her not very angel temper."

"Well, Captain, I will tell you when she comes, for she lives here. But I cannot promise a very gracious reception from her ladyship, as you have been so unfortunate as to offend her. Neither will I promise to give you God-speed in your love making to my little ward."

Just at this moment Marie and Jim (for of course, ere this, the reader must have surmised who the gypsy of Captain Luzerne's adventure really was) entered the barn-yard. Antoine went to assist Marie to alight from her horse, but before he could get to her, she sprang from the horse, and tossing the reins to Jim, exclaimed:

"If there ain't that old mean thing that frightened my cattle! What is he doing here, Tonie? Come courting Camille? Well, if she wants him, I suppose we will have

to give her to him, for we will not want her with her prim, old-maidish ways, when we go to keeping 'bach's hall.' Will we, Tonie?"

"Marie, the Captain wants you to be friends with him; he offended you unintentionally. Come, Captain, I will redeem my promise of making you acquainted with our gypsy queen. Mademoiselle Marie Lafourche, Captain Luzerne. My little cousin, I hope you and Luzerne will be as good friends as he and I have ever been."

When Antoine announced the name, and the relationship of the girl to himself, Captain Luzerne was for a moment visibly embarrassed, for he recalled the not very flattering remarks he had made in alluding to her.

"Oh, never mind, Captain," replied Antoine, observing his embarrassment; "I knew you were not aware of whom you were speaking."

Thus re-assured, Captain Luzerne hastened to make his best bow, and commenced an apology to Marie in the most approved terms.

"I am most happy, Mademoiselle, of an opportunity of apologizing for my apparent rudeness this evening —"

"Now, just stop that and talk sensible, if you please. I do not wish any apology, and if you really want to be friends with me, I will forget all about your frightening my cattle, if you will promise to let me ride your horse tomorrow. I tell you, I like that horse far better than I ever expect to like you."

"I very much fear, Mademoiselle, that my horse is not very safe for you to ride; and then, if he is going to be my rival in your regards, will not I be going against my own interests in loaning him to you? But if your riding him is the only condition upon which we can be friends, I must consent. But will not Mademoiselle allow me to accompany her in her ride?"

"Well, I cannot promise," replied Marie, "because you see it's a heap more jolly to go just as I went this evening. And if cousin Camille and aunt Eda find out I

am going with you to ride, I will have to have on a great riding habit, and all description of nonsense heaped upon me, until I look just like a walking millinery shop. I do not want to be like other people, and Tonie says I shall not be. Now I am very much opposed to being made a walking advertisement for merchants and milliners."

"Well, if those are the only objections, we will steal a march on them, and go without all those offending articles. So please consider yourself engaged for a ride at seven o'clock in the morning."

"Well, I am not going to stay here and talk to you any longer; I am hungry, and want my supper. But, take care, sir, I do not steal a march on you about that ride. I have not promised to forgive you yet, and I think you do not deserve immediate mercy at our hands;" and, with a merry laugh, Marie ran up the pathway that led to the house. The two young men followed more leisurely.

CHAPTER II.

Life to me has been but a dream,
Aye but a cruel jest—
Pleasures have turned to pain,
Robbing the soul of rest.

"WHY is it I never saw your little cousin before, Antoine?"

"Because she was away at school when you were here before. You must excuse her wild, rude ways, for we have never sought to correct or restrain her in any way, and she has grown up a perfect child of nature. There is no art about her. She thinks what she says, but if you succeed in gaining her affections she would die for you; and, wild and untamable as she appears, she is a perfect slave to the will of those she loves; and then, too, she is scarcely fourteen years old yet."

"Fourteen!" exclaimed the Captain; "I did not think her so old as that. Why, in a year or two more she will be in the market matrimonial."

"Not so soon as that, I hope, for there are few men who would have sufficient patience

with my poor little Marie's many faults. And then, very unfortunately, she is an heiress, and might become the victim of some fortune hunter. I would not wish to see her go out into the world and take her place there as a woman for many years yet; but, as far as that is concerned, I will be compelled to yield to the judgment of others, and I believe my sister has determined to introduce her into society at fifteen; so I suppose she will make her *debut* next year. She will return to school again in a few days, to remain there one year. Her brother has been travelling for several years; indeed, Marie has not seen him since she was a mere child, and I doubt if she really has any recollection of him. My uncle's immense fortune was left entirely to Louis, but as he could not legally hold it all in his own right, he has always promised my father the property should be equally divided between Marie and himself. I have no doubt the pledge will be fulfilled when he next visits us, especially if he does

not marry previous to that time. My father says the business must be arranged on Louis' next visit. I do not think but that it will be."

The two gentlemen entered the drawing-room just in time to hear Eda's parting injunctions to Marie.

"Dar, chile, you looks heaps mo' 'spectable now. Do try to 'have yourself dis one ebenin. Don't you see, chile, your 'noxious conduc' make people 'tinually takin' 'ceptions to you. Why, dar the strange gemman, dis berry ebenin, take you for some low white trash. Well, here de young gemmans an' I is going to leave you, so 'member now an' 'have yourself. Your sarvent, young gemmans. You see I was just telling young Miss 'bout tryin' to be more dignified; but laws, Massa Captain, it does no good nowhow; quick as she git chance, off she go wid Massa Tonie huntin', or wid Jim after the cattle; and de wust of it is, Massa Tonie 'courages her in her bad 'pensities. So dar in't much hope, after all ole

Eda can say, doin' any good. But I is talkin' too long. Good ebenin', gemmans."

"Well, that is an eccentric old negro," laughingly exclaimed Captain Luzerne, as Eda made her exit from the parlor; "but how is Mademoiselle? I suppose mammy Eda's lecture has left her in a very humble and penitent frame of mind Oh, here she is! I don't think she is looking very penitent either."

"No, Captain; you need not expect to see me the occupant of a stool of repentance every time mammy Eda gives Antoine and myself a lecture on propriety; we are quite accustomed to hearing them; are we not, Tonie?"

"Yes, Marie; and I fear we do not, as you say, profit very much by her advice. But we must give more heed to it in future; it is time, indeed, that Marie was a little more dignified. Why, next year, remember, you are to make your *debut* in society, and I fear you will not make a very brilliant *debutante*, unless you improve greatly this year."

"Why, Tonie, what is the matter with you? What have I done?" exclaimed Marie, almost ready to cry; "it was you that always encouraged me in what you term my undignified ways, and now when I was just graduating under your tuition, you go over to the enemy — that is, cousin Camille and mammy Eda. But supper is waiting; come, and perhaps after this is over you will feel better. I will not kiss you until you apologize, sir," exclaimed the little gypsy, leading the way to the dining-room.

"That last would be a terrible punishment to me," said Captain Luzerne; "were I in Antoine's place, I should most certainly hasten the reconciliation by a most humble apology."

"You are impertinent, sir. I am not accustomed to such nonsense, and if you wish me," she replied, flushing with anger, "to be friends with you, stop it."

"Marie, Marie, you are positively insulting. What is the matter with you this evening?"

"Nothing, Antoine," replied Marie, "only I feel this evening just like I was entering upon a new life — a new stage of existence. It is true, too true, that next year I must go out into the world, and take my place there as a woman — represent the last descendant of a proud family. I must indeed cease henceforth to be a child."

"There, Marie, hush! Be yourself. I do not think the sad, the tragic, at all becoming," replied Antoine, as they entered the supper room.

We will leave our little heroine and her friends for a brief time, while we give a short account of their previous history.

First, then, we will commence by informing our readers what we have as yet failed in doing — that is, the place of residence of our heroine and other characters we have introduced to the reader in our story.

Seviere Place, the plantation of M. Lafourche, was situated near San Antonio, Texas. We must not pass Seviere Place by without giving the reader a short descrip-

tion of it, and relating a romance connected with it.

Previous to its purchase by M. Lafourche, Seviere Place had been owned by a Frenchman of high rank, who, in the earliest settlement of the country, had emigrated to Texas, where, purchasing several thousand acres of land, he built a princely residence upon it, whose magnificence reminded one more of some castle or chateau of la belle France, than the private residence of an American citizen. The building itself (an immense square structure of grey stone) stood upon the summit of a high hill; it could be seen for miles around. The grounds, of several acres in extent, gently sloping to the foot of the hill, were beautifully laid out and ornamentéd, and presented the most magnificent appearance. But the poor old gentleman did not long survive to enjoy the magnificence of Seviere Place. His wife he had buried in France, but he possessed an only child, a beautiful daughter, and his heart's idol — all his vast wealth was as

nothing to him in comparison with his child.

Unfortunately she was no exception to the generality of only daughters. She was a petted, spoiled child, wilful, headstrong, always having her own way in all things. Finally an adventurer came in the neighborhood, whose acquaintance Mademoiselle soon made. The man was handsome, agreeable, fascinating; but one at all versed in the ways of the world, or an adept in reading the human character, could perceive he was a person of little or no principle. From their first acquaintance, Monsieur Seviere had taken a violent dislike to him; but just in proportion as the latter's dislike increased, so did his daughter's love or infatuation for the miserable, unprincipled adventurer.

M. Seviere's love for his child was too deep, too earnest, his desire for her happiness too sincere to admit of his seeing her wreck her happiness for life without warning, entreating, and finally, when these proved ineffectual, commanded her to desist from

the course she was pursuing, to stop all further acquaintance with the man; but all in vain. Finally, one day, angered beyond endurance by the girl's threats of eloping with the stranger, if he did not give his consent to their marriage, Monsieur Seviere had locked the girl in a large room in the second story of the building. That very night, through the treachery of a servant, Mademoiselle Seviere attempted to make her escape by means of a ladder, but just when within a few feet of the ground, the ladder broke and precipitated her into the arms of her all too fascinating lover. The noise awoke M. Seviere, who rushed out of the house, and ordering the miserable scoundrel to leave his premises, attempted to force his daughter to go back to the house. The man, thinking desperate means required desperate measures, drew a pistol and shot the father through the heart. M. Seviere fell dead at his erring daughter's feet, his life-blood saturating her clothes. Mademoiselle Seviere gave one look at him who had

been the most affectionate and devoted of fathers, and saw that he was indeed dead — dead without one word of forgiveness to his erring but repentant child — and from that moment she was a raving maniac. The unprincipled scoundrel who had blighted and ruined that once happy household met his just deserts at the hands of the hangman.

CHAPTER III.

"'Tis sad to muse upon the past,
Where erst our cherished hopes were bright;
While deep'ning shadows round us cast
Their gloom unpierced by cheering light.

But there is one consoling thought
Still left to cheer the heart oppressed —
To ease the mind with sorrow fraught,
And give the weary spirit rest."

HAVE deviated slightly from the beaten path of my story, to relate the foregoing, thinking an incident connected with even the home of our little heroine of interest to our readers — for Seviere Place had been Marie Lafourche's home since she was three years of age, previous to which time she left France with her parents and an only brother, who was many years her senior. The voyage was a long, tempestuous one, and proved too severe for the delicate constitutions of both Monsieur and Madame Lafourche, and long before the vessel arrived at New Orleans, they were buried in the ocean. Thus was Louis a mere boy, left far from home and friends, with his baby sister. Immediately upon his

arrival in New Orleans, he went to his uncle's in Texas, and placing his little sister in the arms of his cousin Antoine, who was several years his senior, he begged his uncle and cousin to care for her as their own, until he was so situated that he could again undertake the guardianship of her. Louis Lafourche again returned to France. He did not visit America for several years, although all his property was there, under the supervision of his uncle. When he did finally visit his relatives, he found his little sister away at school, and his uncle's family so loth to give her up, that Louis promised to let her remain permanently with them, and to have half of his father's estate settled upon her, the latter part of which promise he had not, at the period of the commencement of our story, fulfilled, but his friends were expecting a visit from him soon, as he had been travelling through the Northern States for the past year or two.

Monsieur Lafourche, the uncle of Marie, had but two children of his own, Antoine

and Camille, the latter a beautiful, accomplished woman, but whose rather prim, precise ways were a source of constant annoyance to Marie. Antoine, on the contrary, rather encouraged, than sought to check his cousin in her hoydenish propensities, and hence he very frequently incurred his sister's displeasure for so doing. Marie's aunt and uncle were too much attached to the frank, generous, high-spirited little hoyden, to try to correct her for what they regarded as a mere trifle. She was a very little too wild, and rude, perhaps, but then she would get over those faults when she was older, they said; so at fourteen we find Marie as wild and untameable as a young Comanche Indian; and that, too, only one year before her admittance into society as a young lady. The honorable graduate of one of the best female colleges in the South, the niece of one of the wealthiest and proudest planters in the South, and heiress in prospective herself of a fortune a princess might envy. Surely, Marie will learn to

appreciate the flattery, the adulations a false-hearted, deceitful, mercenary world is ever ready to lavish upon fortune's favorites. Surely, Marie Lafourche will learn the lesson all women must and do learn, — that the only pleasure that women can ever know, that bears even a semblance to the myth, Happiness, is derived from the flattery, the empty adulations of society, the false professions of friendship, which the young and inexperienced *debutante* thinks and receives as truth; all the lies the butterflies of society choose to breathe into her oftimes too willing ear. And when she gives her heart's true love and devotion to some man whom she is deceived into thinking makes her a like return, but who has (as is frequently the case) married her for wealth, or because her family are influential and can further advance him in some selfish purpose, or from some other equally selfish motive, married a pure, noble woman, only as a return for the love and devotion of her life, to trample that love under foot, to trans-

form her, a noble, pure, truthful woman, into a lying, deceitful, frivolous, butterfly of fashion, or equally as bad, into a bitter, disappointed, hopeless misanthrope. Truly woman's happiest days are those which commence with her *debut* into society, and end all too soon after her marriage. From the moment she is aroused from the deceptive dream, her only pleasure must be found in the automaton-like discharge of a continual round of duties, her whole life, in fact, must be offered upon the altar of a husband's selfish pleasure, and as a compensation, to receive her services when approved of with indifference, and when they happen to be displeasing, not to fail to censure. If the brightness of thy crown accords with the weight of thy cross, oh, woman, it will be brilliant indeed! But we digress too much from our story; we are not writing a lecture upon the uses and abuses of life, society, etc., so we will resume the broken thread of our story.

Captain Jean Luzerne, the friend of An-

toine, whom we introduced to the reader at the beginning of our story, was an old schoolmate of his, but very far from being his equal in point of principle. Had Antoine had the least conception of what Captain Luzerne really was at heart, he would sooner have placed a venomous serpent in Marie's path than to have exposed her to the fascinations of an unprincipled man of the world.

For many years Captain Luzerne had commanded a vessel, and consequently was a sea captain. He had in the first place, however, squandered the greater part of his father's property, so that the remainder of M. Luzerne's days must be passed in almost poverty. Captain Luzerne had only gone to sea, therefore, as a last resort, and would not have scrupled at anything by which he could have retrieved his fallen fortunes. The next morning after his arrival at Seviere Place, and long before his unsuspicious friend had arisen, Captain Luzerne, after taking even more than usual pains with his toilet, went forth for a walk.

"Well," soliloquized he, "the fate that brought me here certainly was propitious. That girl must and shall be my wife. Why, I would marry her for her expectations from this princely property. That old maid, Camille, will not live a year, and as Antoine is not, and most likely will never be married, I think Mademoiselle Marie's husband would have a very fair prospect of being master of Seviere Place at no very distant day. This, with her other expectations, renders her too rich a prize to be lightly passed by. Antoine speaks of her entering society next year. She never enters society until she is my wife. Yes, I need her money, and she shall be my wife; and, then, too, what a pleasure to crush her spirit — the little termagant!

"Hello, Captain! Dreaming, or walking in your sleep, or what is the matter? Why, if my eyes and thoughts had not have had a little more connection with what I was actually doing than your own appear to have, I should have ridden quite

over before I observed you. Did steal a march on you about that ride, did I not?" and with a merry laugh, Marie dashed past Captain Luzerne, mounted upon his horse, the noble animal seemingly conscious of his frail burden, went along as gently as the old grey of the previous evening possibly could. Captain Luzerne followed Marie, and Jim went into the barn-yard.

"Why, Mademoiselle, you little gypsy, how did you succeed in eluding me thus?"

"Well, you see I concluded last night I did not want you with me 'no how,' as Aunt Eda would say; therefore, I went to Uncle Jim's cabin, told him to get up earlier than usual, put a bridle on your horse (which I could do myself, if I was a little taller, and the horse would not hold his head so high) and I would go with him to take the cattle back to the fields; so this morning before your eyes were open, I was off with him."

"Well, I will acknowledge myself beaten

for once, but promise to ride with me this evening?"

"I cannot promise. Now, you see, it is just as the notion takes me, and if I were to promise now I might change my mind before evening; I never like to be tied down by promises. You see, I always like the impulses of my heart at the moment of action to guide me in all I do; therefore, I do not like to make promises, and seldom do."

"But, Mademoiselle, the preachers tell us, 'the human heart is desperately wicked;' therefore, we can never hope for perfection while we acknowledge no better criterion by which to actuate our conduct than merely the impulses of the heart, which, nine times out of ten, may be wrong."

"That is all nonsense, Monsieur Captain; my plan is to keep the heart true, pure as possible in the sight of God, to make that the study of our lives. And tell me, is not the impulse of a pure heart a better, truer guide to right than the dictates of a

calmer, colder reason? I think so. Were some of the greatest wrongs, the greatest villanies that were ever perpetrated, the result of calm, deliberate reason, or the bent of some impulses of the heart, as immediately acted upon? I know the heart conceives those wicked things, but the calmer reason (that the world advocates, as our best guide through life) brings by its aid those villanies to a more fiendish perfection. The impulses of the heart may lead us into small wrongs, but I contend reason often leads us into great ones. But we are getting too serious, entirely, and yonder comes my shadow, otherwise mammy Eda; now for a lecture on propriety. Do you not pity me, Captain?" laughingly exclaimed Marie, as old Eda entered the yard, who being very fleshy, found keeping in the wake of her young mistress was no easy task.

"Lookee, hur, Miss Marie," exclaimed the old woman, "don't you knew its most time fur breakfast? Dar you is, your har not fixed, and dem old clothes on. Why, you

looks mo' like some po' white gal dan a young lady ob quality. How often ole mammy have fur to tell you dat de quality ladies don't act dis way? Come to de house dis minit, chile. Dar's Massa Tonie comin', he will 'tain de gemman till I fixes you little mo' spectable." And very unwillingly Marie accompanied the old woman, leaving the Captain to explain to Antoine how she had checkmated him.

"I tell you, mammy, it is no use to change my dress, for I am going hunting after breakfast with Tonie, and I am sure to tear my dress before I get back. If you will just let me alone this once I will promise to behave myself this evening — be as prim and dignified as my cousin Camille yonder in the parlor window. Hello! there is uncle. Good-by, mammy, I must go to him. You shall have the pleasure of fixing my toilet this evening," and before poor Eda could prevent her, Marie had made her escape and rushed into the parlor.

"Good morning, Miss Fuss and Feathers,

ain't you glad to see me? You should be, at any rate, for I have been courting that old fellow down yonder in the stable-yard, just as well as I can for you, and to reward me for my disinterested kindness, please entertain him this forenoon, while I go hunting with Tonie, that is a dear, good, cousin, and I promise you to be so dignified this whole afternoon; I won't even go with Uncle Jim after the cattle, and that, you know, is a terrible sacrifice for me to make, Camille; so please promise."

"Marie, you surely have not been having any of your impertinent talk with Captain Luzerne? I do wish you would ever learn to be like other people, and less like a savage, in some respects. Why, your manners are worse than those of the little negroes."

"There, that will do, *ma chere* cousin, it is no use to talk to me, but please, will you not promise to keep the Captain here today while I go hunting with Tonie, for I will not go if he does? Please, Camille, promise me this one request."

"Well, Marie, irresistable, as well as incorrigible, I suppose I must promise; but, really, my dear Marie, I do hope this will be the last time you go with Antoine, for otherwise, I shall rejoice when the time comes for you to return to school. You are getting too large to be romping about the woods; so remember, this must be the last time you go with Antoine."

"Well, Camille, I do not know that I shall be sorry when the time does come for me to return to school; for that man will remain, and I assure you my pleasure went with his coming. I cannot account for the feeling; but that man exerts a strange influence over me. I do not like him. On the contrary, there is something repelling about him; yet he seems to control me by a species of fascination anything but agreeable to me."

"Why, Marie, how silly you talk! Antoine has long known Captain Luzerne. He belongs to one of the oldest and best families of New Orleans."

"Yet that fact does not of itself constitute him a gentleman."

"Marie, you must not speak in this manner of one who has been received a welcome guest in our house by my brother. Do you, for an instant, think Antoine would have received Captain Luzerne here and introduced him to us, if he had not known him to be a perfect gentleman?"

"Cousin Tonie is very liable to be deceived. I think when a person strives to keep heart and conscience pure in the sight of God, it is but natural to suppose that such a spirit coming in contact with one not equally pure, would produce this strange repulsion."

"Marie, you must positively quit encouraging all those strange fancies of yours; they will certainly make you unhappy for life. It is all folly to expect perfection in this world. Dream not, hope not to find it. If you still persist in your foolish dream you will never know peace. Your life will be one long existence of vain longings for

something you will never find, and in the end it will be one of bitter disappointment. I acknowledge the real pleasure one of your romantic organization experiences in life far exceeds that realized by more worldly natures. Yet even this advantage, in the possession of a sensitive organization, is more than counterbalanced by the acute suffering they must endure; for in the same degree that they feel the joys of life, so do they suffer from its disappointments and its cares. Would that I could, dear Marie, persuade you to look upon life in a more worldly point of view. Believe me, by so doing, you would almost insure your happiness for life; while, by nourishing and harboring your present views, you almost insure your future misery. I sometimes almost tremble for you. If you grow up to womanhood as you now are, your life will be one of constant suffering."

"There, there, cousin! Please do not go to prophesying evil now for me. My future must, yes, shall, be bright and glorious.

Why, the very reflection of the past would make it so! My life has been far too happy to augur ill for the future. But I must go now and get my breakfast, and then, ho, for a ramble in the glorious old woods of Seviere Place! Come, Camille, and now please do not forget to keep that dark spirit a close prisoner this forenoon. I am so fearful of his joining us in our hunting expedition."

"I will try to gratify you, Marie; but fear my powers of attraction will not be sufficient to deter him from joining your party if you are gone too long," replied Camille, as she followed her to the breakfast table.

CHAPTER IV.

"Heart on her lip and soul within her eyes,
Soft as her clime, and sunny as her skies."

IN the large old-fashioned dining-room, the remainder of the family were already assembled, with Capt. Luzerne. On the entrance of Mademoiselle Lafourche and Marie, the Captain arose from the table to offer chairs to them. Marie haughtily refused his offer, saying:

"Thank you, Captain; that is the servants' business — they will attend to me."

"Marie, what is the matter with you this morning? Be yourself, little one! I never knew you to be rude to any person before, especially a guest of ours," exclaimed Marie's uncle, looking at her more in surprise than anger.

Marie saw in a moment that by her apparent rudeness she had offended M. Lafourche.

"Pardon me, Captain; forgive me, dear uncle. I did not intend to be rude to any one;" and the tears started in poor Marie's eyes.

Thus was fate, a seemingly uncontrollable fate, continually, step by step, weaving a net around poor Marie Lafourche, from which there was no escape. Had her whole family approved of, and been coadjutors with Captain Luzerne in his fiendish, dishonorable designs, they could not have been more able assistants than their ignorance of his true character and his plans now made them. Antoine, Mlle. Camille, Madame and Monsieur Lafourche all had implicit faith in him. How could a young, inexperienced girl do otherwise than trust him too? She would, during his entire visit, be ever thus forced to receive his attentions, however disagreeable they were to her.

"Tonie, dear Tonie, I want to speak to you just one moment," exclaimed Marie, as they were leaving the breakfast-room.

"What is it you wish, my gypsy queen? I am at your service," replied Antoine, stepping back into the dining-room.

"Why, Tonie, I do not want you to ask Captain Luzerne to go with us this morning,

when we go hunting. Somehow, I feel just like this will be the last time I would ever get to go with you, and I want us to go alone. I do not wish him to go with us, and if he does I will not go," exclaimed Marie, in her usual impulsive, passionate manner.

"Why, Marie, it would be very rude in me to leave Captain Luzerne and go away with you, to be gone possibly half the day. You would not wish me to be guilty of impoliteness toward a guest, and an old friend, too, merely to gratify a caprice of yours, would you, darling?"

"No, Tonie, you know I would not, but indeed this is not a mere whim; I have a very good reason for my request; and Camille has promised to remain in the parlor and entertain Captain Luzerne, so you see he will not be inconsolable for the loss of our society, while the void is so agreeably filled by my accomplished cousin. Please, dear Tonie, promise me you will not ask him to go with us, just this once. I prom-

ise you I will not repeat the request again during his visit," and unable to endure even the prospect of disappointment in a cherished wish, poor Marie burst into tears.

Antoine was not proof against her tears, and, indeed, in this he was no exception to the majority of his sex, for what man is proof against this, woman's most effectual weapon?

Notwithstanding my anxiety to sustain the credit for dignity and strength of character for the lords of creation, truth impels me to say — not one.

"There, do not cry, I suppose I must sacrifice my ideas of politeness upon the altar of my little gypsy's tears. So get ready, little one, while I find the Captain and get him to excuse my absence, and ensure him the far more agreeable company of my sister, and I doubt not he will think so."

Marie quickly dried her tears and ran into the hall, and taking from the hat-stand a large straw hat, tied it on and pronounced

herself ready, when Antoine appeared with gun and game-bag.

"Well, little girl, we will start without further delay. So you were anxious to go with me alone today, and now tell me why?" asked Tonie, as he ran down the steps leading from the hall door to the gravel walk.

"Now, Monsieur Tonie, I do not want to be serious today, but as you have so kindly yielded to my wishes, I will answer your question. You see I must return to school next week, and perhaps I shall never get an opportunity of going with you again, for Camille does not approve of my going with you hunting, she thinks it makes me wild and rude, and prevents me being like other people; so I promised her if she would entertain your friend and permit me to go with you this morning, I would never go again, and I have made another terrible sacrifice. I promised mammy to allow her to make my toilet in the most approved fashion, and not to laugh or speak with any spirit, but to put on a languid, fashion-

able air, and every time a person speaks to me to have an eternal simper (a so-called fashionable smile) ready as an answer; and to spend the afternoon and evening in the parlor with my hands crossed in my lap, listening to Monsieur Captain's string of small talk instead of going with Uncle Jim after the cattle.

"This is what Mademoiselle Camille and mammy calls being like other people."

"Now I hope, dear Tonie, you understand at what a terrible price I have bought this morning's pleasure," and Marie ran laughing up the pathway that led to the woods.

"Like other people! God forbid she should ever be like some I know," murmured Antoine; "heartless, treacherous, worldly! Oh, Camille, I did not think you, of all others, would attempt so soon to instil the miserable lesson in that pure young heart, that our bitter experience has taught us. Oh, Camille, it was cruel in you! Why thus seek to darken her young life? She will suffer less when the storm actually bursts

upon her, than to live on in moody anticipation of evils which, had it not been for you, she might never have known existed. That treachery and deceit may beset her pathway through life, that to successfully battle with the world we must become like it, and part and parcel of it, were the last lessons I should have taught her. And then she may never know sorrow or suffering to any extent; why render her unhappy now? For the present, at least, and future, too, while under my care, she shall never know care or sorrow that I can ward off. Camille, pride has blasted your happiness, and will be the true cause of your filling an early grave. I, perhaps, of all your friends, alone knew when Eugene De Estepe went from our house a discarded lover, that it was the dictate of pride and not your heart that sent him away. But, poor Camille, you reckoned too much that time upon the strength of your pride, as your pale cheek and faltering step bear but too painful witness. But still not content with rendering

up your own life upon pride's altar — no; that was not enough — insatiate pride thirsted for still more victims, and my own happiness must be the next sacrifice. For by tears and entreaties you wrung from me the promise to give up all idea of ever making Louise Hurberte my wife, because she was only a poor music teacher. You tried to induce me, instead, to wed that vain, haughty Pauline Roberte. In this, thank God, your powers of persuasion failed to accomplish their purpose, for I would sooner espouse the fiend of darkness than that heartless, selfish woman of the world, who would wed me because two fortunes are better than one, and I, perhaps, am more eligible than the generality of those by whom she is surrounded. You shall not crush my last remnant of hope for happiness, by converting my darling Marie into a soulless, heartless woman of the world."

"Antoine, why do you not talk to me?" complained Marie; "here I have been trudging along without you saying a word for

the last half hour. You will have plenty of opportunities for being silent when I am gone; so please talk to me," Marie exclaimed, out of all patience, waiting for Antoine to recover from his fit of abstraction.

"What is it — what did you say, Marie? I was thinking, studying so deeply, that I did not hear you," replied Antoine, arousing himself from his painful reverie.

"Why, I say I want to be very happy today, for I wish always to look back upon this as one of the happiest days of my life, and here you go moping along; why, I might just as well have brought Victor, that great old dog of yours, for all the company you are."

"I do believe you have been half asleep ever since we left the house. But look, Antoine, can we ever forget this scene? Beautiful Seviere Place, my dear, happy home," cried Marie, as she stood upon the summit of a hill, where, far as the eye could reach, she could behold the broad lands of Seviere Place. It was the season for pick-

ing cotton, and hundreds of slaves were busily at work picking the snowy balls. Every now and then, a shout of careless, happy laughter rang out from among them, as wontedly they performed their daily task, in happy ignorance of the joys of "freedom" and "suffrage," which only awaited them. "How lovely dear old Seviere Place is! I wish I was confident I could spend my life here, and I would be happy. But before I come home again from school, you will marry some cross old thing; and you will live at Seivere Place; but, Monsieur Antoine, I give you fair warning, if you do, I will marry Fred Welber, that ugly old bachelor, whose wig I pulled off when I was a little girl."

"What is that, Marie, about pulling off Fred Welber's wig? Do you suppose he will forgive you for that?" asked Tonie.

"Oh, yes, he has long since forgotten it. You see it was when I was a very little girl, I heard Camille talking about wigs. 'Wigs, what are they?' I asked. Camille

told me Fred Welber wore one, and a great many people who did not have sufficient hair. From that moment, I determined to see for myself, and so the first time that Fred came, he commenced teasing me as usual. 'You had better let me alone,' I said to him several times, but to no purpose. At last, getting a good opportunity, I made a dash for his beautiful curly hair, and was only too successful, for the whole apparatus came off in my hands, leaving him perfectly barefoot on top of his head. There were several young ladies in the parlor, and Freddie's mortification can be better imagined than described. But the ladies went into the back parlor while Fred adjusted his head covering, and you may be sure it was a long time before he attempted another romp with me. But he and I are very good friends now, and when I go there to see him and his mother, were I Eugenie of France, I could not be a more honored or welcome guest. So you see Freddie does not bear me any malice for that rude act of my childhood."

CHAPTER V.

"Better thy heart-strings should play
Their funeral dirge to the grave;
Better that thou should'st lay
Where willow and cypress wave."

WE could narrate many incidents gentle reader, connected with the life of our young heroine, but it would render our story too long and tedious for the most patient of you; therefore we will omit relating any more of her adventures of the week that preceded her return to school.

Early one morning, about one week after the occurrence of the last chapter, Captain Luzerne and Marie left Seviere Place for New Orleans, the Captain having volunteered his services to Monsieur Lafourche to escort our heroine back to school.

Very unwillingly Marie accepted his offer, for she had not yet overcome her repugnance to being in his society. Many were the sad hearts Marie left at Seviere Place that morning, for white and black of the household would sadly miss the bright spirit

ever ready with a kind word for all; and especially Antoine and his father would for many days scarcely know what to do without her. But, oh, had they but known that never more would their little darling behold Seviere Place, what anguish would have wrung their even now sad hearts! Oh, how inexpressibly thankful should we be that a kind and merciful Providence has so ordained it, that we cannot rend the misty veil of futurity, and gain from the book of fate a foreknowledge of coming events! How then would imagination magnify the ills of life until life itself became unendurable, and the lists of suicides would be more than doubly trebled! As it is we travel along in the journey of life — the storms of care, trouble, and human agony burst suddenly upon us; but because foreknowledge has not gifted imagination with the power of magnifying and exaggerating the evils and misery of the coming tempest, we are enabled to endure its fury; and presently the bright sunshine of prosperity and happiness again illumines our pathway.

So it was with the family at Seviere Place. Could they have peered into the untrodden paths of futurity, and beheld the precipice upon which their beloved Marie was even now standing, they might possibly have rescued her from a lifetime of sorrow. But a strange, mysterious Providence, whose motives and decrees are so wisely ordained as to be above the comprehension of human knowledge, so willed it that our little heroine should tread the thorny path of adversity; therefore the breakers were concealed by the smooth waters until the frail bark should be dashed upon them. But if the children of earth would only seek resignation to their Father's will, their lives would establish the truth of the fulfilment of the promise, "as thy day so shall thy strength ever be."

But for the present we will leave the family at Seviere Place to seek oblivion of their sorrow in the discharge of the daily cares and duties incident to plantation life, while we go with our voyagers.

"I have promised myself much pleasure from your company in this journey," Capt. Luzerne said to Marie, as they walked back and forth upon the deck of the vessel which bore them from Galveston to New Orleans.

"I am very sorry then for it, because you will most assuredly be disappointed, for I do not intend to come on deck any more until we arrive at New Orleans. You know you are to come for me at the commencement of the Christmas holidays and take me to Seviere Place. Perhaps by that time I may like you better, or at least, well enough to endure your society, which latter is not the case now. Good-by, Captain, you will not see me any more until we arrive at our journey's end, for I shall order my meals to be brought to my room," replied Marie, and without further ceremony she left the Captain and retired to her state-room.

"That girl will thwart all my plans yet, if I'm not careful; but if I ever do get

her in my power, she will repent the many insults I have had to endure from her during the past week. Yes, I am resolved upon one thing more—I will not leave New Orleans until Christmas; the ship will be ready for sea but very little before that time, and I can very easily delay her departure until I have my bonnie bird securely caged. My bringing her to school will gain me admittance at any time to see her, and of course the Superior will readily grant me permission to sometimes take her to ride, and to places of amusement, as this is her last year at school. And proud as my young lady is, and however much Mademoiselle may dislike me, the dull, monotonous round of school duty is too galling upon her high spirits for her not to gladly embrace every opportunity of relaxation from them. By unwearied attentions to her I will win her confidence, and then, in some unguarded hour, to persuade her to marry me will not be difficult. I almost shrink, sometimes, from the 'fuss' that will be made about my

stealing old Lafourche's niece, and wish that trouble well over; but that does not deter me from my purpose, for her money I must have, and there is no hope of my getting it by fair means, for however well they may regard me as a friend, I do not approximate perfection sufficiently near to suit Antoine's ideas for a husband for this idolized Marie. I am almost fearful of putting off this business even until Christmas; but one thing is certain, Lafourche family will never see her again until she is my wife.

"I do not know what to do with my bird after I get her. I suppose I could take her and leave her with the 'governor' (for that was the term the Captain invariably made use of in speaking of his father); but then he would pet and spoil her, until she would be ten times more unmanageable than she now is, and that would not do. Well, I suppose I had better secure my bird before I form any plans for her future cage; but I think the ship would be the best school of discipline for unmanageable

spirits like hers. I must not, however, keep her there long, because she might find out my relations with Julie De Bourge, and that I do not wish, for although I do not love my intended wife, I know she is pure and innocent, and wicked as I am, I do not wish her to know more of the sin and wickedness going on in the world than I cannot prevent.

"I wish she were not quite so pretty and interesting. She will win the hearts of the crew, and that will interfere with the course of discipline I have planned for her especial benefit. But time enough yet for those things; the question now of most importance is, will it be possible to persuade the little vixen on deck or into the cabin again now — during this voyage is my best time. Well, I will make the trial in the morning, at any rate," and leaving the deck, the Captain sought his room.

We will, for a moment, take the liberty of intruding upon poor Marie, who upon entering her room, had thrown herself upon

her bed to shed the first bitter tears of her life. She was unhappy, she knew not why. Tell me not, gentle reader, that coming events do not cast their shadows before them. Already was Marie Lafourche in the shadow of coming years of sorrow, of bitter disappointments, of vain regrets. Already was she standing upon the very threshold of a lifetime of misery and trouble.

Why, oh, why, had fate marked out such a terrible future for one so little fitted by nature and experience to endure it?

That question could only be answered by Him who marks out the destinies of earth's children, and which they must fulfil. Smile, oh, skeptic, if you will; but if this is not true, if there is not an uncontrollable fate from which there is no escape, not even by the hand of death, why did not something snatch poor Marie from the terrible destiny awaiting her? Why did not some angel warn her relatives, and whisper in her ear that she was in the foils of a serpent, and to escape before it was too late. Because her

destiny was sealed, her path in life marked out, and strength will be given her to endure.

"Oh, Tonie!" she exclaimed, "why did you send me with that man? Why did you not come yourself? I know I shall never see you again; my very senses seem paralyzed. Something seems to hasten me along, and I feel just like I was in the shadow of some terrible trouble, from which there was no escape. Oh, beloved cousin, you have warded off every trouble and care from my pathway all my life, and can you not now save me from what I feel to be an impending evil? Oh, darling Antoine, your past love and devotion will only have the effect of rendering me unfit to bear any future misery or trouble. Was it not mistaken kindness that has thus far plucked all the thorns from my pathway, and left me only the roses to walk upon? Is it right that I should only drink of the cup of happiness, joy and love, while many, but very little my seniors, have drained the cup of woe? No, no; I will not yield to this

weakness, this cowardice. All I ask is, give me strength, oh, God, to perform my duty to Thee — to fulfil my destiny in such a manner as to cast no reproach upon my family; and above all, oh, Heavenly Father, grant that I may ever be an honor and a credit to the holy name of woman, and with a brave heart and patient resignation I will meet the future, whatever it may have in store for me. But one thing I am resolved upon; no act of mine shall ever sully the proud name of Lafourche." And wearied with the contending emotions which had fairly shaken her slight form, Marie soon sank into a sweet sleep, the like of which could never visit the pillow of him who was meditating a foul wrong against that innocent being.

Oh, Antoine, why did you trust that innocent child to the care of one whom you only judged by the promptings of your own noble, generous heart to be true and honorable? Why did not something warn you of the error you were committing in placing her at his mercy?

CHAPTER VI.

"My cup of sorrow doth o'erflow,
While traveling o'er this dreary road;
Distress attends where'er I go,
While struggling 'neath this heavy load.

Bereft of fortune, friends and home,
And all that others prize as dear,
My fate, perchance, as thus I roam,
May draw a sympathetic tear."

WE will pass over the few months that intervened between the time of Marie's return to school and the following Christmas, when she was to return to Seviere Place to spend the holidays. During this time Captain Luzerne had remained, as he had proposed, in New Orleans, and had been unremitting in his attentions to his intended victim.

Although, gentle reader, we would like to paint our little heroine a paragon of womanly perfection, yet Marie possessed that curse of our sex — faith in man. She was too young, her experience had been such that she had not yet been aroused from the delusive dream which wrecks the happiness of nine-tenths of the women;

and the polished man of the world had been only too successful in gaining the confidence, if not the heart, of that poor, silly girl. From time immemorial either inordinate vanity or some species of madness has induced woman to confide in man's professions of love, constancy, fidelity, and in more than half the instances where she has done so has that confidence been betrayed. We do not censure man for this, it is his nature to be inconstant; but we do censure woman for the vanity, the folly that leads her to dream she possesses the power to retain the love she is but momentarily the object of. Woman, vain fool! Will she never learn to crush that yearning out of her heart for the passionate, devoted love which she gives? Woman, if you would be happy, commence in early youth to crush that longing for affection from your heart. When the proper time comes, you may meet a man whom the world calls honorable, whom you feel you can respect and honor. Marry him — be a dutiful, truthful, obedi-

ent wife. In return, if he treats you with kindness and respect, be satisfied; ask no more.

Once, in conversation with a friend (who was himself a model of an affectionate husband), I was rather amused at a frank confession of his. "It is all folly," said he, "to think, to dream, the love, or passion rather, which exists between lovers, will continue long after marriage. I cannot say as to how the case is with women, but with men, if I may judge the sex by my own experience, this love passion dies out, and is replaced by a calm, profound respect, and happy is the woman who retains even this."

But pardon, most patient reader, this digression, and return with me to the boarding-school where we left Marie Lafourche.

"I tell you, girls, I do wish I were in Marie Lafourche's shoes this Christmas. You have all succeeded in getting a peep at the handsome Captain, who has called so frequently to see Mademoiselle, since the sum-

mer holidays. Well, he is to escort her home this Christmas, and they do say if our Marie so will it, he will be her devoted slave for life; is it so, my beauty?" and the beautiful Creole girl caught Marie, and prevented her leaving the school-room.

"Josie de La Tour," replied Marie, "please let me go, and do not talk such nonsense to me; you know it annoys me."

"There, there, do not cry, Marie," continued her tormentor; "but really, any girl should feel proud of such a conquest, and that, too, before leaving school. I hope, dear Marie, you will not pass many winters in New Orleans, if you are always going to be so successful with the gentlemen, for I do not wish to be an old maid, and very unfortunately, I am neither a beauty nor an heiress, therefore I cannot hope to successfully compete with so terrible a rival; so please, dear one, do be charitable and give me just one season in which to try my fortune in the market matrimonial. This is the only favor I ask, and you will see if I

do not make good use of my time;" and the gay, light-hearted girl turned to meet the reproving glance of one of the sisters who had entered the room in time to hear the conclusion of poor Josie's speech.

"Mademoiselle de La Tour, the Mother Superior would be most seriously offended did she hear of your making use of such language; do not let me hear it, and this offence shall not be repeated to her. Here is a letter for Mademoiselle Lafourche."

Marie sprang forward and eagerly grasped the letter extended to her. It was from Antoine, and contained news for which she was totally unprepared. The letter we give verbatim:

SEVIERE PLACE, Sept. 25, 185–.

MY DEAREST MARIE, — You will sympathize with me in my affliction, when I inform you that my poor sister is no more. She has for years been afflicted with heart disease. Last Sunday she received a letter from a friend of Eugene de Estepe's, informing her of Eugene's sudden death.

She was found some hours after in an almost lifeless condition; the shock had been too severe for her delicate constitution. She revived after the application of restoratives, and earnestly begged that I might be sent for. I went to her, when she entreated that I would give her the satisfaction of seeing me united in marriage to Louise Hubert, before she died. Louise was sent for and Father L—— united us in marriage. Camille did not live one hour after the ceremony was performed. Thus in one short hour my parents had one daughter taken from and another given them. To you who so well know Louise's purity and goodness, I need not tell how happy I am; yet my happiness is not without alloy when I think, had my sister lived, I might never have gained her consent to call Louise by the blessed name of wife. I have still other news for you. My cousin Louis, your brother, is married to a Northern lady, and he writes my father that his wife objects to coming South to live, and that you must

go there immediately, as you can better complete your education North. My father wrote to him entreating him to keep his promise of letting you remain permanently with us, but to no purpose, and I suppose you will have to go after visiting us during the Christmas holidays. It will be very hard to give you up, my darling, but my father thinks it best not to anger Louis by a refusal, as we are completely in his power in regard to your property. You will be with us, so Captain Luzerne writes, on Tuesday, so this letter will barely reach you before your departure for Seviere Place.

Let not our affliction grieve you too much, my darling; it is the will of your Heavenly Father, we must submit.

Come to us my birdie, for the last time; but let not this make your visit gloomy. Come and cheer our sad hearts with your bright presence; and then we will beg Louis to let you soon return to us again.

God bless you, is the sincere prayer of

Your devoted cousin,

ANTOINE LAFOURCHE.

"Camille dead!" exclaimed Marie, "and Antoine and Louis married!"

"Dear Camille! I will never see you again; how I wish I could have asked your forgiveness for the many times I have given you pain by my wild, hoydenish conduct! Oh, Camille! I will try to imitate you now; I will never again do anything you would have disapproved of;" and long and bitterly the poor child wept over the death of Camille Lafourche. But at length, she, for the first time, comprehended the remainder of the letter — that she must leave Seviere Place, perhaps forever. "Leave Seviere Place! when the hope of living there all my life has buoyed me up all these years? No, no! I cannot leave dear old Seviere Place, the home of my happy childhood!"

Overcome by the violence of her emotions, and the thought of leaving her old home, Marie threw herself down upon a sofa, and was again weeping violently, when a servant announced Captain Luzerne, who entered the room before Marie had risen from the sofa.

"What is the matter?" he asked, taking a seat by her side. The sister, who usually remained in the room while the young ladies received company, considering her presence unnecessary, since Marie's friends had considered Captain Luzerne a suitable person with whom to entrust their young relative, withdrew. They were therefore left alone.

Again, oh, fate! I implore of you, tell me, why did you fail to warn Marie of the impending danger? Why did you not unmask that man, and thus rescue that poor child from a lifetime of sorrow?

Marie Lafourche, child of destiny, courage! It is useless to shrink. The terrible fiat has gone forth, and thou, with all other victims of an uncontrollable fate, must meet and bear with fortitude its decrees, from which there is most assuredly no escape.

"Tell me," continued the Captain, "I implore of you, Mademoiselle, what it is that distresses you?" and at last Captain Luzerne learned from the weeping girl that Camille was dead, and that she was to go

North to school, and was to leave Seviere Place, but from some unaccountable fatality, she failed to tell him of the only two events that would possibly have saved her from being the victim of a fortune hunter — the two marriages in her family.

The Captain determined, if possible, to induce the unhappy girl to marry him that very day.

"Mademoiselle, tomorrow we leave this place for your uncle's; would you not like to take a ride? this, possibly, may be your last opportunity for years of riding in New Orleans."

"Yes, Captain, take me anywhere, so that I can forget this great trouble. You are very kind, dear friend, to always think of giving me pleasure, and I have been very rude to you, I fear, but you will pardon me for the past, and I will strive to merit your kindness in the future," replied Marie.

"Do not speak of the past, Mademoiselle; I, too, have done much to annoy you. But now we are wasting time in useless apologies. I will return in half an hour; be

ready by that time; and as the boat leaves early in the morning, perhaps it would be better to go to the hotel tonight after your ride, instead of returning here. Therefore, as your trunks are ready, I will see the Mother Superior, and have your baggage sent to the St. Charles; so bid farewell to your schoolmates, and exchange vows of eternal fidelity while I am gone. Instead of half an hour, I will give you an hour; so be ready and looking as pretty as possible on my return;" and before Marie could offer any objections, if she would, the Captain was gone to make the arrangements he had proposed. But we will take the liberty of following him to the various places he will visit in that one short hour. First, he calls for a handsome carriage at the St. Charles; next, engages a splendid suite of rooms there; then entering the carriage, he drives to the clerk's office and procures a marriage license; then calling on a priest, he invents some plausible excuse for a hasty marriage, and engages his services; and lastly, drives back to the school for his victim.

CHAPTER VII.

"I have too deeply read mankind
To be amused with friendship; 'tis a name
Invented merely to betray credulity;
'Tis intercourse of interest — not of souls."

MARIE had taken leave of her friends when Captain Luzerne returned, and was awaiting him in the parlor; the Mother Superior was with her. The feeling of awe (reverence) which her position had inspired in Marie's heart toward the Superior, had kept her from confiding to her her fear that Captain Luzerne was unworthy the confidence of her relatives. Had she done this, even at the last moment, the Mother Superior would have refused to give her in charge of the Captain. But, unfortunately, she made no effort to break down the barrier of reserve between them, and Marie Lafourche went forth to meet the destiny awaiting her — a woman's destiny — to devote her pure young heart to the interest of a brutal husband, who never would appreciate the priceless jewel within his grasp — a woman's first and only pure and holy love.

"You must take good care of my little girl, and carry her safely to her friends," the Mother Superior said to Captain Luzerne, as he left the parlor with Marie.

"Be assured I will, Madame; had I not been considered very trustworthy, her friends would never have confided so priceless a jewel to my care;" and the man who, in so short a time, would prove false to every tie of friendship and honor, hastened the departure of his victim, whom he would not feel quite sure of until she was completely in his power.

"I really regret leaving my old school, Captain; I have been here so long it appears like my home. Oh, I wonder if the pleasure I shall find out in the world will compensate for the loss of the many dear friends I leave here; and oh, Captain, will I ever be so happy again as I have been here?" Marie exclaimed as she gazed with tearful eyes at the old building which had been her home for so many years.

"Come, Mademoiselle, the bright world

which awaits from without these gloomy walls has far more attractions in store for you. But come, if we delay very much longer here, we will not get to see a great deal of the old Crescent City," replied Captain Luzerne, and hastily assisting Marie into the carriage, he took a seat by her side, and they were driven rapidly away.

They were soon in view of the ship-landing, when Marie exclaimed:

"Where are you taking me, Captain? We are near the ship-landing; you never brought me here before."

"I did not, and for that very reason I have brought you here this evening," replied the Captain. "Do you see the large ship just opposite us?" continued he; "if you would like to go aboard of it we will. It is considered one of the finest vessels that visit this port, and is commanded by your humble servant, Captain Jean Luzerne.

"Oh, yes," exclaimed Marie, with something of her old vivacity; "I should like to go aboard, that is, if it will not inconvenience you too much to gratify me."

"Nothing gives me more happiness than to be the means of giving you pleasure. Believe me it would be the greatest blessing I could ask of heaven to have you always with me. But I fear that can never be. In a few days we part, perhaps to meet no more on earth. I to roam the briny deep until, perhaps, I find a grave beneath its waters. You will go to your brother in the far North, enter society, and will, no doubt, soon marry there, for beauty and intellect such as my little friend possesses, will not long remain unappreciated. Then you will forget the friend you met at Seviere Place; but believe me, your image has not left me since we met there. I never had a sister. My mother died years ago, and with the exception of my aged father, I am all alone in the world. If I ever marry, my wife will be all the world to me; having been all my life without love and sympathy, it will be doubly appreciated once it is mine. But come, let me assist you out of the carriage, and then you shall

see my home, the only one I care to claim in the wide world, and if it were shared by you I would not exchange it for the palace of an emperor."

"How beautiful!" exclaimed Marie, as she stood within the spacious cabin. "I do not blame you for your enthusiasm; if I were a man I should be a sailor."

"So long as that is impossible, be a sailor's wife, Marie; be my wife. This vessel shall be your home, its commander your slave. All that lies in human power to make you happy shall be done. Be mine tonight, Marie; we can be married this evening, and tomorrow you shall leave here for Seviere Place. Your cousin may be surprised at your hasty marriage, but he will not be displeased. I do not believe there is one living with whom he would sooner trust his little cousin than myself. Then you will not have to go North, you can be with your friends as often as you desire. Will you consent, my little darling, or will you refuse and be sent away to

the North, far from home and those who love you? Does my little girl love me well enough to be my wife?"

"Captain, I do not think I do, but I may in time learn to love you. I do not know what answer to give you. Antoine placed me in your care. He knows and loves you. If you think he will approve of my being your wife, if I can render your life happier, you have my consent," replied Marie, too much excited and too unhappy to scarcely know what she was consenting to.

Captain Luzerne almost carried the pale, trembling girl back to the carriage, and after giving orders to the driver, they were soon at the residence of the priest. In less than two hours after leaving school, Marie Lafourche forged the chains that would bind her to years of misery, to a lifetime of wretchedness. Yes, poor girl! those bonds which to many are flowery ones, will be to thee clanking chains. With the setting of the sun that evening, also set the sun of

happiness for thee forever. The ceremony was scarcely over before Marie sank into a chair, exclaiming:

"Oh, Captain! I wish Antoine were here. I fear I have done wrong."

Before Captain Luzerne could reply or hasten their departure from the room, a young man entered from an adjoining apartment. He was a noble-looking man, and as poor Marie looked into the deep, earnest blue eyes, which expressed such sympathy for her, she could but wish she had been in his care instead of that of the dark, passionate man who stood beside her, and to whom she was bound for life.

"Is it possible, Jean Luzerne," exclaimed the young man, "that you have persuaded that child into a marriage with you, unknown to her friends?"

"I do not permit any meddlesome Yankee to interfere in my business, so beware, Gerald Clifton," angrily replied Captain Luzerne.

"I do not think, Captain Luzerne, that

my sympathy for that poor girl (whose every hope of happiness for life you have blasted by this marriage, and which led me to ask the question I did,) renders me deserving of the title of 'meddlesome;' and as to my being a '*Yankee*,' the fact of my being born and brought up in New York City makes me no more a Yankee than yourself," calmly replied the young stranger, his honest eyes expressing the contempt with which he regarded Luzerne.

Captain Luzerne did not appear anxious to continue the conversation, but hurried his almost unconscious bride back to the carriage and drove rapidly in the direction of the hotel. Long years after, Marie's meeting with the stranger would be recalled to her mind, and their next meeting would be under even more distressing circumstances than this one. Arrived at the hotel, Captain Luzerne consigned Marie to the care of a servant, and was just leaving the hotel when who should he encounter but Antoine and Louis Lafourche.

"Captain Luzerne, the very one we have been searching almost every street in the old Crescent City for, the last three hours! Where is Marie, Captain? The Superior told us she left the school during the afternoon in your care, and we supposed we should find you both here," exclaimed Antoine.

"We have just returned," replied Captain Luzerne, "from a ride. Your cousin just received your letter today, and I found her, on calling at her school, in such distress at the news it contained that I procured a carriage and took her out riding, thinking it would assist in restoring her to a more tranquil state of mind; but, I regret to say, it had not the desired effect; and I have just left her in the care of an attendant."

"You have been very kind, dear friend," Antoine replied; "but I doubt not you are aware of the nature of her trouble. My sister's death, no doubt, affects her, but her brother's marriage, and his wish to remove

her to his home in the North, very possibly troubles her more than anything else; but he is here to compromise the matter, and offers to allow her to remain conditionally with us at Seviere Place. If she remains she must relinquish all claim upon her brother's property; and my father offers her the place in his heart, and the interest in his property, left vacant by the death of Camille. I was not aware my cousin Louis expected to come for his sister when I wrote to Marie, but almost immediately after dispatching Marie's letter, I received another from Louis, informing me of his determination to come for Marie himself, and mentioning the day he would arrive in the city. At my father's request, I came here to meet Louis, and, if possible, induce him to resign in our favor all claims to his sister, and am happy to say I have succeeded beyond my expectations. But I must see my little gypsy, and lighten her heart of its weight of sorrow. Louis will entertain you in the meantime, Captain."

"Stop, Antoine; before you see your cousin there is a revelation to be made which cannot take place in her presence. You know my family, Antoine, is an old and respectable one, but you do not know one thing, that is, that I have reduced myself and my father to almost poverty. I determined some time since, when I learned the state of affairs from the 'governor,' to retrieve my fallen fortunes by a wealthy marriage. Fate threw your cousin in my path; from the first evening I saw her, I determined she should be my wife; but I also knew it would be impossible to gain your consent to my marriage with her, but this did not discourage me. When I brought her from Seviere Place, I determined she should never see it again until she was my wife, and she will not, for we were married this afternoon."

"Merciful heaven! Jean Luzerne!" exclaimed Antoine, "is it possible I have been so completely deceived in you! Oh, my darling cousin, would that I could have seen

you laid in your grave beside Camille before you became the victim of a fortune-hunter. Villain, come with me, and in the presence of your victim, promise to supply to her, so far as lies within your power, the places of the friends you have deprived her of. Had you persuaded her into this marriage because you loved her, I would have forgiven you. But I will not be the only sufferer from this. It will break the heart of my aged father, when I return home and tell him a dishonorable scoundrel, wearing the sacred garb of friendship, betrayed our confidence in him, and has stolen our darling from us."

"Stop, Antoine Lafourche, I know in this instance I have acted dishonorably, but I am not a coward; I cannot nor will not receive with impunity more of your vile epithets. Your cousin is my wife, here is our marriage certificate. I do not think it best for you to see her; she is very unhappy, and seeing you in her present state of mind, would only add to her

misery. And now as to my making any promises to you in regard to my treatment of your cousin — well, that will depend upon the amount of the fortune she receives from you. You must not be unreasonable; you see I would not reasonably be expected to put myself to very much trouble for a bird who did not come to me in a golden cage. The setting doubly, trebly enhances the value of the jewel, so my dear friend, be very careful how you receive Jean Luzerne as a relative. I know this news is disagreeable to you, from its sudden announcement, but if you undertake to thwart me in my object in marrying your cousin you will only make a bad business worse; for I do not mind telling you now, that the necessity for wearing the mask assumed is over; that Jean Luzerne knows no such word as honor or principle, and that self-interest is the only altar at which he has ever worshipped. Long before I knew there was such a person in existence as that little petted, spoiled fool, your cousin, or

rather Madame Luzerne, I should have said, I loved as well as I am capable of loving, a beautiful, accomplished girl, the daughter of an old Frenchman who died bankrupt in this city some years ago. If she had possessed wealth, you would never have had the honor of an alliance with the house of Luzerne; but unfortunately, the fair Julie's only recommendation was her beauty, and that caused her ruin in the eyes of the world, for she is my mistress. So, beloved cousin, you see your darling Marie has quite a formidable rival. Now it is possible I might be induced to give up the fair Julie for a consideration, for money is more to me than beauty, and my wife bids fair to make a very passable looking woman some day."

"Captain Luzerne, you have said enough; like yourself, I can endure no more. As to my cousin Louis, he can speak for himself; but I tell you frankly not a dollar of the Seviere estate will you get, for my cousin Marie having no legal claims upon

the estate, you cannot get it by compulsion. Louis, what do you say? will you divide your estate, and give half of it to a black-hearted villain, such as Jean Luzerne acknowledges himself to be?" asked Antoine of Louis Lafourche, who had entered the room a few minutes before.

"No! By my father's will I am entitled to all his property, and not one cent will you receive from me," replied Louis, only too glad of an excuse for keeping all of the immense fortune left by his father.

Antoine tried by every means in his power to induce Captain Luzerne to permit him to see Marie, but without avail; so the next day he departed for Seviere Place to bear the sad news to those anxiously awaiting his return. Louis returned to the North, and Marie was left alone with her terrible destiny.

Many of my readers may accuse me of over-drawing the character of Captain Luzerne in the interview we have just narrated with the relatives of the young girl who

had just become his wife. Trust me, my reader, I have no wish to paint the character of Captain Luzerne darker than it really was — for a similar character had only too terrible an influence upon my own destiny, and it is ever painful to me to recall a semblance of the past by even partially resurrecting it in these pages, without exaggerating it.

Again, the manner in which Captain Luzerne disclosed his marriage to the relatives of his wife, may appear a singular course for one to pursue whose sole object was money.

Captain Luzerne, villain as he was, relied too much upon the pride of his wife's family. He supposed by disclosing his real character he could extort more money from them as an inducement to treat their young relative well, and also to prevent society from learning what a terrible *mesalliance* a Lafourche had made. But for once his plans did not prosper.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Let us not burthen our remembrance
With heaviness that's gone."

"Could my grief speak, the tale would have no end."

WE will for the present leave our heroine, and follow Antoine Lafourche to Seviere Place; and indeed, we will in imagination precede him there, and note the preparations for his arrival.

Madame and Monsieur Lafourche, Louise, and mammy Eda were in a perfect state of excitement. Eda, from her long rule at Seviere Place, still held the reins of government, and woe unto the unlucky negro who fell under the displeasure of her sable majesty. One would imagine, from the extensive preparations going on, that the inhabitants of Seviere Place were expecting a large company, instead of only four travellers, and the mere possibility of some of Marie's schoolmates coming home with her. But, oh, their's was fated to be only another sad illustration of the fallacy of human hopes.

"You, Sally!" exclaimed old Eda, entering the parlor just as a young negro girl was leaving it, "I say, you call dis parlor dusted? Now wouldn't you be shamed, nigga, fur your little missus to come home an' find dis room in such a fix? An' den you knows dat company's comin' wid her an' Massa Tonie. You, Jim, come dis minit an' lay de fire all ready to light in de parlor, an' all de spar bedrooms; and mind, nigga, you don't make no dust or litter 'bout dem rooms. Dere, I b'lieve dat's all I got to see to up here; I mus see how dem niggars doin' in der culnerry 'partments, as Miss Lou call 'em; well, it's proper, I s'pose, 'cause Miss Lou is edicated if she was po', an' she know; but kitchen is heap mo' shorter word, dat's so, sartin;" and old Eda trudged off to give the benefit of her presence and scolding to the unlucky wights of the colored persuasion she might chance to find in the kitchen.

Just in the midst of one of her harangues there, word was brought her that Antoine

had arrived. Supposing of course that her idolized Marie was with him, Eda ran out to meet Antoine, and arrived at the gate almost as soon as Louise and the remainder of the family. Poor old Eda, you are not alone in your disappointment, in not beholding your young mistress; your grief will, no doubt, be excessive for awhile, but its very violence will soon relieve it of its poignancy. But, oh, how different will it be with the white-haired master of Seviere Place! in all earth's storehouse there is no balm for grief like his; for, had Marie been his own child instead of only his niece, she could not have been any more the idolized child of his heart than she was. And is this anything to marvel at, when we consider that, when a mere infant, she came to him a helpless orphan, and that too, under circumstances calculated to awaken his deepest sympathy? Oh, Marie! you, like many more of your sex, have exchanged the gold for the dross, the pure, tried jewel of unselfish love for the empty casket.

Gently, delicately as possible, and ever mindful of his aged father's already lacerated heart, Antoine informed him of the events with which our reader is already acquainted.

We will not attempt a description of the heart-crushing agony of Monsieur and Madame Lafourche, the sympathy of Louis and Antoine with them in their trouble, the wild demonstrative grief of mammy Eda, and others of the servants by whom Marie was almost idolized.

Few of earth's children have been so blessed, so highly favored of heaven, as to have never known trouble; we leave it therefore to their imagination to depict the grief of the family at Seviere Place, upon whom heaven had laid its chastening rod.

A few days after the return of Antoine, he and Louise were seated one day in the parlor, when Eda entered the room and asked permission to speak a few words to Antoine.

"What is it, mammy? Am I so great

a stranger that you must ask permission to make a request of me? You know, mammy, there is no reasonable request within my power to grant that I would refuse you," Antoine said, smiling at the troubled, embarrassed air of the old nurse.

"Why, I wanted to ask Massa Tonie somethin' an' I is 'fraid he wont unnerstan' me, but I's goin' to esplain it well as I can. You know, Massa Tonie, I has been raised here; I has nussed you an' Miss Camille bofe; an' loved you bofe well as my own life; but somehow dat little helpless chile, my poor Miss Marie, she got deeper hold on ole mammy's heart dan all de odders put togedder; an' please forgive me, dear Massa Tonie, but I wants to leave you an' go to my chile, an' help her to bear her trouble. You see I is no use here, Massa Tonie, an' I feel like I couldn't live widout my chile;" and unable longer to control her feelings, old Eda threw herself down upon the carpet and commenced weeping bitterly.

"Do not cry, dear, faithful old mammy, and I will see what can be done. As far as I am concerned, although it pains me to part with you, I will give my free consent to your going to Marie. But do not be too sanguine, mammy, for I have no idea Captain Luzerne will consent to your coming. I will write to him, however, and ask his consent. I would not for any one else in the world but you, mammy, ask a favor of that heartless scoundrel; but for your sake I will beg of him to permit you to come to them," Antoine replied, much affected by old Eda's devotion to his unhappy cousin.

"Well, Massa Tonie, I will not trouble any mo' now bout dis awful 'fair; but please let ole mammy know soon, 'cause I feels like I could not live much longer widout seein' my chile." And old Eda left the parlor in much better spirits than when she entered it.

CHAPTER IX.

"Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait."

T is a mystery to me, dear Antoine," Louise said to her husband, after Eda left the room, "how you could endure all the injury and insult that man has heaped upon you. Why, few men would have endured what you have, and allowed the treacherous betrayal of friendship to go unscathed."

"Why, my gentle little wife would not advocate a duel, I hope. Really, I did not give my Northern bride the credit of being more hot-blooded than the daughters of the South." Then, assuming a more serious tone, Antoine continued: "Louise, while we are discussing this unpleasant subject, I think it best to further explain to you my reasons for my conduct toward Captain Luzerne. In the first place, I do not entertain the same notions of honor that some of my Southern brethren advocate. I do not

think it would be right in me to peril my life in a duel, break the hearts of my aged parents, and blast the happiness of my gentle Louise, merely to sustain that false-termed code of honor; and neither will my true friends respect me less for braving the world's opinions in preference to sacrificing the happiness, perhaps the lives, of my parents and my wife upon the altar of the world's erroneous ideas of honor. And then, Louise, as regards my unhappy cousin, it would have made her situation infinitely worse. It will be understood by our most intimate friends that Marie Lafourche has contracted this marriage in opposition to the wishes of her relatives. The course I have pursued will prevent the scandal, the notoriety a duel would have given this miserable affair. My cousin's future, I own, will be sorrowful enough; but she is a Lafourche — their honor is safe enough in her hands; and the holy Catholic faith, which is a part of her life — those two principles, family pride and religious faith, so firmly

implanted in her heart, will render her sufficiently strong to successfully combat with her hard destiny. I feel, my dear wife, that Marie's future troubles and sufferings will awaken and develop the noble, brilliant talents I feel she possesses. Yes, Louise, Marie's childhood, scarcely yet o'er, gives promise of a glorious womanhood. My only regret is that her splendid talents could not have been called forth beneath the peaceful shades of Seviere Place."

"What! do you mean to say that Marie will be a literary character?" asked Louise in surprise; "such an idea as that, in connection with her, really never entered my mind."

"That is because you have been with her so little, your opportunity for studying her real character and disposition so limited," Antoine replied. "Yes, Louise; I do really think my cousin has talent sufficient to gain for her high literary renown; and I am confident that fame will yet be hers—the reward of her own genius and industry. Yet it is

a sad reflection, but none the less true, that literary glory will be all she will have to fill her measure of happiness, possibly, in this life; that which her noble heart will most yearn for — passionate, devoted love will never be hers, I feel sure, while Captain Luzerne lives. Marie, finding love, sympathy, congeniality denied her at home, too purely honorable and high-principled to accept them from outside her home, while she wears the accursed bonds that bind her to Jean Luzerne, will naturally turn to that only avenue by which she can honorably commune with the hearts of others — the pen."

Did you ever think, dear reader, how many of the gifted sons and daughters of Literature have had their talents developed in the manner prophesied by Antoine Lafourche in regard to his cousin's future career? Did you ever consider, when reading some entertaining book, the fruit of the intellectual labor of some brilliant author, in what manner that glorious talent was first

awakened, which can call forth in your own heart this all-absorbing interest? Those passionate feelings, lofty ideas, glowing aspirations are almost always the offspring of suffering, disappointment, and the most terrible agony the human heart is heir to. Yes, my reader, it is thus the thoughts that give you so much pleasure are purified by suffering, cleansed of earthly dross by fire. And yet the world — the thoughtless world — offer humble adoration at the altar of genius, feeling, knowing no sympathy with the suffering *man* or *woman*, as the case may be. No, in profound admiration of the talent of the brilliant author, the poor, lonely heart, yearning for pure, devoted, unselfish love and sympathy is forgotten.

Yet, oh, in how many instances would the hard-earned laurel wreath be gladly cast aside for the simple, humble flowers of affection! Never, kind reader, let the thought escape you when reading some glorious work of genius, that the fountain

head of that powerful talent which challenges the world's admiration, was, in all probability, a fiery sea of trouble. Let, therefore, a pure, holy friendship and sympathy mingle with and moderate your admiration and adoration of the sons and daughters of literature. For, be assured, the hearts of nine-tenths of the authors that have lived, have only found momentary alleviation from terrible suffering in communion with the hearts of others, through that thrice-blessed medium — the *pen*. Therefore, oh, world, be not chary of your praise; be lenient in your criticisms, for in almost every instance, your adulations must fill the measure of happiness of the sons and daughters of genius! But it is right, it is well, that a few be offered a sacrifice upon the fiery altar, that by their glorious, purified and God-given genius, the world may be enlightened and made better. But again, most patient reader, we are guilty of digression.

It would have been well if the aged master and mistress of Seviere Place could

have viewed the marriage of Marie in the light Antoine did, and could have borne her loss as he did; but unfortunately, this could not be. Aged and (from ill health and trouble) childish, they were not prepared to endure with the fortitude younger persons would have done, the accumulated sorrows and disappointments of the past few weeks; and before a month had elapsed after Marie's marriage, her white-haired old uncle and aunt slept the sleep that knows no waking in this world in the lonely little burial-ground of Seviere Place. Yes, the noble old couple who had for so many years dispensed with lavish hand the hospitalities of Seviere Place, were at rest at last.

Oh, would not a merciful heaven permit their purified souls to be the future guardian angels of the idolized Marie! It is a sweet and holy thought, and sometimes as memory reverts to the life of our heroine, I think it must have been so. It was surely so ordained by a kind and loving Father, that those who had so loved Marie Lafourche in this

world were permitted to watch over, to guide that frail bark into the glorious harbor in which it finally anchored, and made her life the brilliant success it was.

But I must stop my dreaming, if dream it is — this thought that has given me more happiness than all else combined — ere I call upon myself the sneer of the cold, worldly philosopher, who will call my dream the silly sophistry of a woman.

The halls and lofty rooms of Seviere Place, which so lately re-echoed to the merry laugh and the light footstep of Marie, to the more stately tread of the haughty Camille, to the gentle voices of Monsieur and Madame Lafourche, were still and deserted now. In the darkened library of Seviere Place its young master knelt with bowed head and aching heart, imploring of heaven resignation to its unalterable decrees.

In her room the gentle young wife knelt, asking of heaven the withdrawal of the chastening rod which had been laid so heavily upon him she loved.

The grief of the servants rivalled that of Antoine, especially that of poor old Eda, who, since her earliest recollection, had lived at Seviere Place. The death of her idolized master and mistress was severely felt by the affectionate old creature, and following out the characteristics of her race, she made no effort to stifle her feelings; and when in Antoine's presence, her wild demonstrative grief added much to his distress. But we will, for the present, leave the family at Seviere Place, to turn once more to Marie.

None will mourn the death of her beloved uncle and aunt more sincerely than our heroine, and none who weep over the death of the master and mistress of Seviere Place but whose tears will be sooner wiped away than hers. The child-bride of Jean Luzerne will find nothing in the dreary future calculated to tempt her into forgetfulness of the dear old home, or the far dearer relatives there.

CHAPTER X.

Sweet sunny smiles and winning tones,
  And tongue of flattery, too,
May often speak and loudly own
  Deep friendship felt for you;
But man has here some selfish ends,
  Which oft he seeks to gain,
By loud professions to his friends,
  Which trials will prove vain.
Then ever think where fate may lead,
  'Mid sadness or 'mid glee,
That all are not true friends indeed,
  Who so profess to be.

THE residence of Jean Luzerne's father was a large, gloomy old building, situated on one of the most unfrequented streets in New Orleans. The gloomy exterior of the building was only rivalled by its cheerless interior. The faded, moth-eaten, antiquated furniture, the worn, soiled carpenting, the lack of neatness and comfort that pervaded the entire establishment, painfully contrasted with the cheerful, well-kept rooms at Seviere Place.

Altogether, the home to which Captain Luzerne took his young bride was not calculated very soon to bring her forgetfulness of the old home, and the dear ones there,

from whom she was forever parted. The evening following Captain Luzerne's marriage, his father was seated in one of the gloomy, cheerless rooms of the old house, when suddenly the door opened and his son entered with his young wife.

"Hello, governor, what do you think of the daughter I have brought you? The worst of the business is, I have the bird without the cage, and I do not know what to do with her," exclaimed Jean, as he threw himself upon one of the antiquated sofas, leaving Marie standing in the centre of the room. Monsieur Luzerne arose from his chair, took the hand of the trembling, frightened girl, and turning to his son, asked:

"Jean, is this child your wife? Your introduction, so short and unsatisfactory, does not inform me whom I have the honor of welcoming to my lonely home."

Before Captain Luzerne could reply to his father's question, Marie (who had been gazing into the kind, venerable face of the

old man, who, if his unprincipled son would permit him, would in the future supply the place of those dear friends of whom she had so recently been deprived) threw her arms round M. Luzerne's neck, and burst into tears.

"Look here, this will not do; I cannot endure this folly any longer. Let us come to an understanding in regard to this business, so that all parties in future may know what to depend upon. Let me tell you, governor, if you encourage that girl in her sniveling I will take her from you, and on board of the ship, and I can tell you her life there will not be an enviable one; neither do I want any more scenes here today;" and Captain Luzerne arose from the sofa, and rudely separated Marie from the arms of his father.

This was only a mere commencement of the brutal treatment to which our heroine must in future learn to submit. Will the heart of Marie Luzerne be able to bear up beneath this accumulated weight of agony

and mortification? Ah! if you doubt it, you little know the strength of religious faith and family pride so firmly implanted in the heart of every true daughter of *la belle France*. If she endured with patience and fortitude her heavy cross, her beloved relatives would be spared the mortification of having the subject of her unhappy marriage discussed in society, and the thousand misrepresentations and exaggerations which would be placed upon every act of hers. She would hide, in short, a betrayed and breaking heart beneath a smiling mask.

Oh, how often is this cross laid upon woman in the first circles of society! She not only has to bear her terrible burden of sorrow, but has to hide it from the world, by acting a part, wearing a smiling face, when bitter, scalding, blistering tears would be more in consonance with her feelings.

But thou art right, oh, sister woman, in this; the world only court thy smiles. The most heart-rending story of human agony

would only be met with indifference. The bitter tears, the agony of heart which wrings thy soul, must be borne *alone*, and when peace and sunshine are thine again, go forth into the midst of the false, heartless butterflies of fashion, that flit within the gold-guarded precincts of the *first circle* of our land, and you will meet a flattering reception there. But when thy sorrow becomes unendurable, when thou can'st no longer wear the false smile which never had its birth from the natural source, happiness, but drew its unnatural life and brilliancy from pride, and the desire to hide from the eyes of a censorious, uncharitable world a breaking heart. How long, oh, world, will the necessity last of this added weight to woman's cross, for so long as society is cursed by those worse, infinitely worse than thieves, *scandal-mongers*, will the necessity exist for women to act this deceptive part from which in almost every instance her truthful soul shrinks. Yet if she does not enact her part successfully, scandal, with

its ever-venomed tongue, will rend aside the fair veil with which she has sought to guard the portals of her heart, and what should be the sacred precincts of her home; and she will have her sensitive heart continually lacerated by being compelled to bear the stings of scandal from which she is unable to protect herself.

We have not, as we have stated in a former chapter, sought to paint our heroine a paragon of womanly perfection; on the contrary, she had her faults, (as who of her sex has not,) and was liable to all the catalogue of follies alleged against woman. But my object is to prove what trials, temptations and snares a woman may pass through unscathed, and with credit and honor, even if she fight the battle alone. Yes, with religion in her heart, family honor and pride at stake, woman — a true woman — is impregnable to the darts of even Satan himself, or the most accomplished and fascinating of his satellites in the form of *man* in this world. Go on, therefore, woman;

teach weak, wavering *man* a lesson he stands greatly in need of — that of braving the hardest destiny unappalled.

About three weeks after Marie's marriage, as she was seated with her husband and his father in the old library, one morning, letters were brought in by the servant. The Captain did not appear in a very good humor with the world in general, or himself, either, this morning. He had just returned from a short voyage upon which he had started immediately after his marriage, leaving his wife with his father, with many admonitions to her to become reconciled to her chains by the time he returned, or at least sufficiently so to spare him, on his return, the annoyance of continually seeing her in tears.

"Why, Marie," said he, on parting, "I would rather see you display some of that angel temper you did on our first meeting, than to put up with this everlasting blubbering, because I could soon crush that spirit; and this folly must be stopped; I

will not endure it!" and thus they parted. Upon his return he had found his wife and father getting along so happily together that his presence would rather mar than add to their pleasure. This state of affairs did not just suit Captain Jean, hence his displeasure. He arose, and commenced opening the letters upon the servant's depositing the mail upon the table. One at last for a moment claimed his attention.

"Well, I do wonder what Antoine Lafourche takes me for, after him and my honored brother-in-law swindling me out of Marie's claims to the valuable estates; he writes, asking me to receive that miserable old negro, Eda. Thank you, dear cousin, I have one profitless burden from your family, I do not care in the present state of my finances to receive another," and Captain Luzerne threw the letter angrily from him that Antoine had written, in the faint hope of inducing him to permit Eda to come to Marie.

"What is it, Captain? Will Antoine per-

mit mammy to live with me? Please allow her to come. I will promise you to never cry any more — to do nothing that will give you offence, Jean, dear Jean, if you cannot love me, only treat me kindly, and by so doing, permit me to love you. I know I am an ignorant, unprepossessing creature, unworthy the love of an intelligent, accomplished man like yourself; but, my husband, within this plain little casket is a jewel which you will live to see the day when it would be priceless were it within your grasp — the heart. If the heart, which, for the first and last time, Marie offers for your acceptance, is worth winning, commence now by granting this request. Oh, if mercy or pity were ever in your heart, let my dear old nurse come to me!" and for the first time in her life, Marie threw her arms around the neck of her husband, and found relief for her over-burdened heart in a passionate flood of tears.

And what reply did this specious villain make to an appeal that would have moved

a heart of stone? First, rudely repulsing his weeping wife from him, he exclaimed:

"Stop this nonsense, madame, and never again annoy me by a like occurrence! If this old negro were of any value I would very gladly permit her to come, and sell her the moment of her arrival, but as the case stands, I do not hesitate a moment in deciding against her coming, so no more upon the subject, if you please, madame!" and with a mocking bow and smile Jean Luzerne left the room and house.

CHAPTER XI.

When prosperous gales doth waft thee on,
  And sunbeams round thee play,
And success doth each action crown,
  And honor gilds thy way,
Full many, then, will round thee crowd,
  And seem true and sincere,
Whom the first rising adverse cloud
  Will prove as false as fair.
Then e'er remember what you read,
  Wherever you may be,
That all are not true friends indeed
  Who so profess to be.

WE will leave, for a time, the weeping, heart-broken wife, and go with the unfeeling husband, who directed his footsteps, after leaving the house, to the ship. Arriving there, he was told by one of the sailors that Mademoiselle had called during his absence, and was awaiting him in the cabin. Captain Luzerne hastened below, well knowing who the Mademoiselle was that awaited him, for by no other name did the sailors know the unhappy mistress of their captain.

"You were very kind, dear Julie, to visit me thus early. I should have hastened to you immediately upon the landing of the vessel this morning, only some business de-

manded my immediate attention;" and the man who, less than one hour before, had cast his weeping wife, imploring his love, from his heart, attempted to embrace the girl who stood before him with all the beauty of an angel, but with the heart of a fiend. The passions in her heart seemed, for the time being, to have given more than ordinary strength to her arm; for, instead of receiving Captain Luzerne's embrace as usual, she threw him from her, and while the terrible passion in her heart shook her slight form like a reed, she exclaimed

"Do you dare, Jean Luzerne, to attempt to embrace me while your lips are yet warm with the kisses of your wife! Yes, I know all, and may the blackest curses within the power of human conception be thine! Did you not promise, and call upon heaven and earth to bear witness to that promise, that if ever you called woman by the name of wife, that woman should be Julie De Bourghe? Is it thus you keep that word? Jean Luzerne, I loved you with a love whose

measure could not have been filled by the *cool regard and respect* of ten thousand such women as the one for whom you have bartered the fierce, passionate love of Julie De Bourghe. With me it is but one short step from passionate, devoted love, to darkest, deadliest hate! I have taken that step! Yes, start! and well you may, for my hate is such that I could send a dagger through your treacherous heart, only I wish you to live, so that I can blast your every hope in life, make your existence one long, lingering curse!" And the beautiful fury sank down upon a sofa, completely exhausted by her terrible emotions.

Captain Luzerne waited until she was more tranquil, and then, by those fiendish arts known to his sex, so far won that poor wretch over to his views, that when, hours after, she left the ship, she was the slave of his will and passions still.

Poor Julie De Bourghe! child of sin and passions! thy matchless beauty and talents rendered thee worthy of a better fate; but

wretched as your lot is, it is an enviable one in comparison with that of the miserable wife of Luzerne.

Well would it have been for both had a reconciliation between Captain Luzerne and his victim proved impossible that day, and they had met no more.

But we will again go back to Marie, whom we left in the gloomy old library.

For some time after the departure of his son, Monsieur Luzerne permitted Marie to give unrestrained vent to her sorrows in the passionate fit of weeping in which her husband left her; but when she became more calm, he took a seat beside her, and, taking her hand, he said:

"Marie, I think Jean designs taking you with him on his next voyage. If he does, my child, I shall never see you again. My sands of life are nearly run. Nothing would give me more happiness, my dear Marie, than to have you with me in my last hour; but this is impossible. I am the more reconciled to giving you up when I think

of the influence you may yet exert over my unhappy son. You are his wife. Your destinies are bound together for life. You must study his faults and requirements, and conform yourself to them, as I have done, if you would know peace in this world. I, who, for so many years yielded a willing slave to his beautiful mother's imperious will — of whom Jean is an exact counterpart, both in character and appearance — know how worse than useless it is to oppose him in anything, when sooner or later one must submit; and opposition will only call upon you his terrible anger. Will you promise, my child, to try to gain the love of your husband, so far, at least, as to be able to influence him to lead a better and more virtuous life? I know him thoroughly. Gain his heart, and passionate, self-willed, wicked as he is, you can control him as easily as a child. Will my darling little girl promise me this, the first and last favor I shall ever ask at her hands?" and Monsieur Luzerne affectionately embraced Marie,

whom he had at first pitied for her sorrows. But it only needed the intercourse of the last few weeks for him to discover the noble, brilliant qualities of mind and heart which she possessed, and which had awakened in the heart of the old man a depth of love which his wayward, undutiful son could never have called forth.

"I cannot promise, *mon pere*, to try to control my husband in anything," replied Marie; "for, strange as it may appear to you, his education and accomplishments, his brilliant mind, that marks him the polished gentleman in the worldly sense of the word, in these consist the charm, the fascinations Jean Luzerne has for me. These qualities first called forth my admiration, and, *mon pere*, I will confess to you that my admiration has merged into blind idolatry of his intellect. All I ask of is that he will control his terrible temper, treat me kindly, and by so doing permit me to love him. My love for him is so purely unselfish, I do not exact even a semblance of affection

from him, because I feel my perfect inability to inspire a corresponding feeling in his heart to that which I bear him, and even render me reconciled to separation from all my friends and relatives. I cannot myself define this feeling. It is not what the world calls love, but rather an all-absorbing respect, veneration, worship of a superior genius and intellect. I should as soon think, *mon pere*, of raising my puny arm with commands to the wave of the great ocean, as to hope to ever control or influence my husband. Neither would I wish to exert my power over him; for did he but love me his love would be so strong, so all-powerful that, secure within the ark of my husband's love, I would rest content, feeling, caring for nothing but the sweet knowledge that he loved me. Basking in the sunshine of his love, what would the friends of my youth be? But a memory! The world would be as naught, for Jean would be my world. But, *mon pere*, this picture of bliss that I have drawn can never be realized.

Such happiness was never designed for an unworthy child of earth!" and Marie relapsed into silence, to dream of Jean Luzerne, not as he really was, the heartless betrayer of innocence and virtue, but ascribing to him every noble quality, and excusing his faults on the plea of his fearful temper, and her unworthiness and lack of ability to inspire love or regard for her in his heart.

"I fear, my poor child," replied M. Luzerne, "you are cherishing a dream which wrecks the happiness of all too many in this world. The one you love must either possess, or rather, you must imagine he possesses, all the noble, divine attributes within the pale of human conception. It appears cruel in me thus early to undeceive you, but the knowledge must come. Your reason, experience and judgment will yet teach you that the Son of God himself declared: 'There is none good; there is no perfection.' Look upon the works of God, my dear Marie. What tree is there without

its crooked limb or knot? There is no animal without blemish; and, oh, believe me, there is no man or woman without their defects of mind and heart. Had not God in His all-seeing wisdom so willed it that this should be one of the established laws of nature, there would have been no necessity for the Divine command of charity. There would have been no necessity of heaven itself, earth being a paradise, and its inhabitants gods and angels. Your mission, my beloved child, may be to earn a glorious crown by bearing a heavy cross. One of your nature is very liable to extremes. You either experience ecstatic happiness, or the most terrible, abject misery. Try, my child, to govern these transports, and it will add much to your chances of happiness."

"But I cannot, dear papa," exclaimed Marie, "look upon life, upon my fellow-beings, as you would have me do. The moment I could see a fault or weakness in the character of one I loved, no matter

how devotedly, passionately I loved previous to the discovery, that moment would love die out from my heart, though it might possibly be superseded by a species of pity; but even that would be near akin to contempt. I am only too familiar with my husband's fearful temper; but that is, as you say, hereditary, and more recently it has been called forth by my brother and cousin's conduct. But, oh, *mon pere*, if he possess faults or qualities calculated to lessen my respect for him, just heaven grant I may live and die in happy ignorance of them!" and Jean Luzerne should have seen the purity and truth at that moment mirrored in the face of his wife, rendering her beauty almost celestial — her glorious dark eyes fairly dazzling in their brilliancy, inspired by the enthusiasm she felt in the subject of conversation.

And, oh, just heaven, why could not the prayer have been answered? Oh, man, was your miserable nature so warped, so debased by fiendish passions, that you could not

discern the jewel you were trampling under foot? And where was this man, in whom was centered the happiness — nay, almost the lives of his too-indulgent father and confiding wife, at the moment when they were speaking of him, and dealing so gently, so charitably with his faults? On board his ship, clasped in the impure, unholy embrace of Julie De Bourghe, and listening to her burning words of passion. Poor wife! your's is not a solitary instance of a wife's love and confidence meeting similar reward. Yet, with all his faults, blame not Captain Luzerne too severely. First came the temptation of her extraordinary beauty; she by all the arts so familiar to woman, by the power her great beauty gave her, called forth the fiercest passions of his nature. The circumstances of both forbade their marriage, so at last yielding to his entreaties and promises (little caring whether he kept the latter or not, so long as he remained the slave of her will), Julie De Bourghe became his mistress. In the earlier days of their intercourse, it

is doubtful if Captain Luzerne would have permitted even mercenary motives to have induced him to swerve in his allegiance to his mistress so far as to marry, even to acquire wealth to cast at her feet. But at the time of his meeting with Marie Lafourche, the fierce ardor of his passion for Julie De Bourghe had passed away; and wearied, rendered desperate by her constant and importunate demands for money, Captain Luzerne determined upon making a wealthy marriage, and settling an annuity upon his mistress, to cease all further intercourse with her. But, ah! the syren spell that had held him captive thus far was sufficiently potent to continue the enthrallment; and as he held that woman, fit type of a fallen angel, to his fiercely beating heart, he thought of his marriage, which had resulted in no pecuniary advantage, but only sown the seeds of estrangement and dissension between him and his mistress.

CHAPTER XII.

Young traveller o'er life's checkered sea,
  Now setting forth with joy,
Oh! do not dream thy trip will be
  All bright, with no alloy;
For thou hast much indeed to learn,
  As thou sailest o'er life's tide,
And often will thy spirit yearn
  For some kind hand to guide,
With lessons wise, thy vessels prow,
  'Mid the shoals of life's sea,
And so one word of warning now
  I'd whisper unto thee.

A MAN by the name of Kingsley was mate of Captain Luzerne's vessel; he was a married man, and his family lived in an adjoining house to Monsieur Luzerne, and of course Mrs. Kingsley had called upon the Captain's young bride very soon after she became an inmate of his father's house. Marie had returned the call, and since then they had become quite intimate. At the time we speak of, about three months had elapsed since Marie's marriage, and she was still with her husband's father, although the Captain, at the expiration of each successive voyage, had threatened to take her with him. Finally,

as we before stated, about three months after his marriage, he returned home and announced that from some cause he had discharged Kingsley from his employ. Marie, although sorry for the occurrence, did not dare remonstrate with her husband, or ask him to give Kingsley his situation back again. But feeling that she could not do less than pay them a visit and express her sympathy with the family of Kingsley, who were wholly dependent upon him for their support, Marie called that very afternoon, and, oh, it would have been well if she had not done so; for Mrs. Kingsley, no longer deterred from so doing by fear of her husband's discharge, told Captain Luzerne's young wife the miserable story (with which my readers are but too familiar) of his intimacy with Julie De Bourghe.

Marie was for a few minutes too much shocked to speak, but when she did recover the power of speech, it was only to reiterate an angry denial of the truth of the statement made against her husband, until finally

Mrs. Kinsley offered to take her past the residence of Julie De Bourghe that very evening, where she would, in all probability, see Captain Luzerne.

"I will go with you," exclaimed Marie, "not that I believe you; but in the future, when he gives vent to his terrible temper, and treats me unkindly, in some such hour I may be tempted to doubt him, and my mind revert to this miserable story you have told me. Therefore, to satisfy myself — to prove how utterly groundless this charge against my husband is, I shall go; and remember, Mrs. Kingsley, whatever the issue is, I go to do him justice, not to quell awakened doubts of mine;" and Marie Lafourche returned to her cheerless home, to await the coming of evening, when she was to have faith in her fellow-beings forever destroyed. Oh, heaven, why is it necessary that this terrible hour should come sooner or later to so many of earth's children? And, O Marie, it is by a woman's hand this bitter cup is being placed to thy lips,

for from no especial regard for you, but for the miserable satisfaction of wreaking a petty revenge upon Captain Luzerne, does this woman rend aside the vail which has heretofore concealed the true character of your husband.

In the early part of the evening, Mrs. Kingsley called for Marie, and they left the house accompanied by a negro boy who had conceived a violent attachment for Marie, and who had been almost as devoted to her as poor Eda. The boy, of course, was ignorant of the purpose of his young mistress and her friend, but supposed they were going for a walk, as they had frequently done before; but when, on their return, they paused before the house where Julie De Bourghe lived, when too late to prevent his mistress from obtaining the knowledge that would sear her heart like a red hot iron, did the truth burst upon the mind of the faithful negro.

"Dis your work, Mrs. Kingsley," he angrily exclaimed, "dis de way you take

to get even wid Massa Cappen. I's knowed dis awful bissiness all de time, but I would let dem burn de life out me 'fore I would killed my poor little missus by tellin' her; an' you, white lady, to do such ting, why, you not got half de principle of a nigga. For hebben's sake come 'way, dear Miss Marie; don't try to fine out tings dat will only make you mo' misble." But, alas! poor Taylor's appeal came too late to spare Marie the fearful blow. The house, a small cottage with a front yard, was almost concealed from view from the street by the thick shrubbery with which it was surrounded. The front windows, extending from top to bottom of the room, opened like doors upon the little gallery; they were draped by rich lace curtains, which, however, were looped back this evening. Seated upon a sofa in the little parlor, were Jean Luzerne and Julie De Bourghe. The arms of the Captain were clasped around Julie, and her head rested upon his shoulder. The gas was burning brightly, and a person

outside in the little front yard could see distinctly everything in the room. And within that yard, concealed by the shrubbery, Marie Luzerne stood gazing upon her husband, who, at that moment, was almost oblivious of her existence. At length Mrs. Kingsley, frightened by the death-like pallor which had overspread Marie's face, and by the fixed, stony stare which her eyes assumed as she stood speechless, gazing into the room, hurriedly and silently led her from the yard, and when they arrived at the place where they had left the negro boy, Taylor, Marie sank down upon the pavement in a death-like swoon. Several persons passing along the street stopped and offered their assistance, but when they would have carried the fainting girl into the house of Julie De Bourghe, it being the nearest residence, Taylor's vehement remonstrance attracted the attention of a gentleman who was at the moment passing, and who stopped to inquire what was the matter with the lady.

"Thank hebben, it's Massa Clifton, and he help me, I know," exclaimed Taylor, greatly relieved, as he recognized Gerald Clifton in the stranger who made the inquiry.

Young Clifton was quite familiar with the history of Jean Luzerne, and the moment he recognized the unhappy wife, he comprehended the whole state of affairs.

"My office is just across the street; we will carry Madame Luzerne there until we procure a carriage," he said, and lifting Marie from the arms of the faithful negro, he carried her to his office, and laid her gently upon a lounge. Hastily procuring restoratives, Gerald Clifton soon had the satisfaction of seeing Marie recover, and slowly opening her eyes, she gazed wildly around her; but in a moment she recognized Taylor and Mrs. Kingsley, then her eyes wandered to the sympathizing face of Gerald Clifton, and for a moment rested there. But in that brief moment she recognized him, remembered their last meeting, her suf-

fering since that time, and her more recent, and of all others, the most terrible sorrow she had yet endured — that which she had just passed through, which had blasted forever all hopes of her husband's love. For a time she appeared about to relapse again into insensibility. But Gerald Clifton knelt beside her, and in a voice to which his heartfelt sympathy for the unhappy girl lent unusual power, implored her to look to God for strength, to bear with fortitude the terrible destiny before her; and when she became calm and was fully sensible of what he was saying, he told her that her sorrow was only similar to that of hundreds of other women. At length, soothed into calmness by his voice and sweet words of hope and encouragement, Marie asked to be taken home. So, accompanied by Taylor and Mrs. Kingsley, Gerald saw them in a carriage, and safely on their way home. He did not think it best to accompany them, and charged Taylor and Mrs. Kingsley never to speak of the unhappy occurrence of the evening,

for it would do no good, and only arouse Captain Luzerne's terrible anger; but to merely say Madame Luzerne had been taken ill during their walk.

Upon arriving at their home, Mrs. Kingsley left them; so, dismissing the carriage, Taylor assisted his mistress to her room, where, calling his sister Nina, who of course knew as well as Taylor about the history of her master's relations with Julie De Bourghe, Taylor told her the whole occurrence of the evening. Nina loved Marie as devotedly as Taylor, and this fact, added to her brother's distressing story, aroused her deepest sympathy, and she soon had Marie undressed and in bed, when she prepared an opiate that speedily brought sleep and oblivion of her sorrow to the unhappy wife. Nina sat by the bedside of her mistress until she heard the voice of Captain Luzerne in the hall below, when she hastened down stairs and told him her mistress had been taken suddenly ill, and she thought it best not to disturb her, as she was sleeping, and

would the Captain have tea alone, as his father had long since retired, not being very well.

With an oath, Captain Luzerne refused Nina's offer of supper, and entering the library, he threw himself down upon a lounge and soon sank into a deep sleep, from which he did not awaken for hours after, when he was aroused by the boy Taylor, who slept in the room of Monsieur Luzerne. Taylor told his young master that his father was very ill — dying, he feared. Captain Luzerne hastened to his father's room, and the condition he found him in deeply shocked his profligate son, who, notwithstanding his undutiful, disrespectful conduct, really at heart loved his kind, indulgent old father, as well as he was capable of loving any one.

"How long have you been so ill, father, and why did not Taylor call me sooner? You should have had a physician before this!" and Captain Luzerne was hastening Taylor for the nearest physician, when Mon-

sieur Luzerne exclaimed, "No, Jean, my son, it is too late; but send for Father S——, I would see him." Too much exhausted for further speech, M. Luzerne relapsed into silence, and his son offering no objection, Taylor hastened to the residence of the priest.

CHAPTER XIII.

The stars that disappear at morn,
  Oh, think not they are fled,
They are not lost, they are not gone,
  But, mid the glory shed
Around them by the source of light,
They shine more sweetly than at night;
  It is the night that's dead.

And thus the loved who disappear,
  Pass not, perchance, away;
But walk in light so sweet and clear,
  It blinds us with its ray;
On this, to us, benighted clod,
The glory of Almighty God
  Embosoms them in day.

PREVIOUS to arousing his master, Taylor had called Nina, who was sleeping in her young mistress's room. Quietly as possible, Taylor had told Nina of the condition of M. Luzerne, yet their voices had aroused Marie from her sleep, and she announced her determination, as soon as Taylor left the room, to go to the room of her father-in-law. Nina tried to dissuade her from her purpose, but failing in doing so, assisted her in dressing, when they both repaired to the room of M. Luzerne. Marie was not prepared for

the sight that awaited her there. Her father-in-law, still and pallid as if death had already claimed the noble spirit, created the impression in the mind of Marie that he had already passed away. With a wild cry of agony, Marie threw her arms around M. Luzerne, exclaiming: —

"O God! *mon pere*, my only friend, dead! Oh, I cannot give you up. You were all I had left me in the world; come back to me; oh, come back to me!" and poor Marie, completely exhausted by this sorrow, in addition to that which she had already endured, would have fallen to the floor had not Captain Luzerne caught her in his arms. Jean Luzerne, heartless as he had ever been, was deeply affected by his wife's distress, and if Marie Luzerne had only been cognizant of the fact, she could then and there have reclaimed him, and her rival's chain would have been forever broken. But ah! fatal infatuation — that dream of finding perfection in her fellow-being in the heart of Marie Luzerne, the knowledge she had

but that evening obtained in regard to her husband's true chararter, these two circumstances rendered it impossible for Marie to receive her husband's silent offer of his heart and of reconciliation, as she should have done, and the offer, the opportunity, would never again be hers. The happiness of her whole life hung upon the issue of that moment, yet the die was cast — the chances of bridging the gulf forever lost. O dead Camille! thy prophecy of thy cousin is fulfilled; aged and dying Luzerne, thy fears for the happiness of thy son's wife are realized. Poor, fanatical dreamer, you deserve the pity of heaven itself! Poor Marie, we can only hope when you turned coldly from a deeply erring but repentant man, that thy grief had so stupefied you that you did not, could not, realize what you were doing. Poor, silly, romantic girl, we will not condemn you, as you alone had to bear the suffering the issue of that hour entailed. Jean Luzerne's proud heart will never recover from the

shock it received when his wife turned coldly from him; his thoughts instinctively reverted to one who, with all her faults, loved him devotedly, and would sympathize with him in his trouble. Julie De Bourghe rejoice; the bonds by which you hold Jean Luzerne have received additional strength from the events of this hour.

But we left the aged father battling with death, to narrate an incident which would have such immeasurable influence upon the happiness of the two principal characters of our story.

In due time, Taylor returned, accompanied by Father S——. M. Luzerne was in perfect possession of his senses, yet it was very evident life was fast ebbing.

And now, O reader, shall we even attempt a description of the death-bed of a Catholic, with the solemn pomp attending the ceremony of the last anointing of the clay tenement of the departing soul? As our thoughts revert to similar scenes, we have been so privileged as to have wit-

nessed, we feel our utter inability to give anything like a correct description of this last solemn ceremony which the Mother Church prescribes for her dying children.

Suffice that the last rite of the Church was administered, and, even while the chant of the priest reechoed through the otherwise deathlike stillness of the apartment, the soul of M. Luzerne ascended to the God who gave it.

Captain Jean Luzerne knelt in deep and sincere grief by the side of his father's dead body. Father S—— recognized in him and the distressed wife, the persons whom he had united in marriage several months previously, and remembered how disparagingly Gerald Clifton had spoken of Captain Luzerne. The kind heart of Father S——, ever prompting him to deeds of Christian charity, and which, in this instance, made him resolve to try to influence the Captain to reform, to ever hold up his father's almost blameless and spotless life as an example well worthy his imitation.

And as Jean Luzerne listened to the voice of the priest, whose deep interest in the object of his expostulations lent fervor and eloquence to his words, the erring man was almost sufficiently penitent to make a vow of reformation to the priest, when he chanced to meet the cold, pitiless face of Marie, who, with every thought and feeling engrossed with her grief in the death of her father-in-law, could not just now give a thought even to him who had, weeks before, when she had knelt, and in tears implored his love, and been refused; who had so recently betrayed her faith, respect, and confidence; in him who had, in short, dispelled the sweetest, most blissful dream of her life. She could not forget all this; she would not have been human; she would not have been *woman*, if she could have done so.

But, oh, if that poor, young wife could only have permitted the bitter tears of her husband, his (for the time being, at least) sincere penitence for his past misconduct; if she could only have allowed these con-

siderations to wash from memory's page all the past,—and had she knelt by his side, and added her tears and entreaties to the expostulations of the priest, all would have been well. But, instead of this, as I before stated, Captain Luzerne chanced to meet the cold, pitiless look of his wife; the vow of reformation remained unspoken; the tears of penitence were wiped away; and the evil spirit reclaimed his own. Again the auspicious moment was forever lost.

O Marie! you have permitted your frail bark to be dashed upon the breakers of which your dead cousin gave you solemn warning. And did not he, who lies before you so still now in death, did he not tell you how futile was the hope, the dream you were so fondly cherishing, and which would prove such an enemy to your happiness? It is hard to reflect upon any act of one so severely tried by fate as our heroine, but the terrible mistake of that hour will overshadow with darkest clouds the remainder of her whole after-life.

How singular, how almost incredible, does it appear that upon the issue of one brief moment may depend the happiness or misery of a lifetime. How often is a soul wrecked, here and hereafter, by the following out of some idle dream or fancy. O woman! try to follow the glorious example of thy Divine Lord, who is purity itself; who is perfect and holy beyond human conception, yet who never turns a deaf ear to the pleading voice of a sinner of the darkest dye. And never, I implore of you, O woman! turn with disappointment and loathing from one who fails to approximate to, or to realize, your ideal of human perfection. Do not permit any real or fancied strength and perfection of your own character to crush out pity and sympathy from your heart for the less favored of thy fellow-beings; but let the very perfections of your own character inspire in your heart a deeper, purer charity for the imperfections of others. O woman! thy influence is almost unlimited; beware how you wield it. Your mission is a holy and

all-powerful one. But we are too much given to moralizing; we do not confine ourselves sufficiently to the relation of the story, but suffer our thoughts and feelings too frequently to wander from the simple facts, to comment upon what we do relate.

We have thought it but just that we should offer every excuse for the profligate career of Jean Luzerne we could conscientiously, for, as we have not sought to paint his wife a paragon of perfection, neither would we create the impression that he was altogether base and unprincipled; therefore, where we could offer any excuse for Jean Luzerne's many faults, we have not failed to do so. Could Marie's love have, as it were, *stooped* in that hour, instead of seeking to place the object of its adoration high upon a pedestal, so that it can look up, while it kneels in humble worship, in blind idolatry, to what is only fancied superiority, to only a creation of the imagination, well, — we will not condemn where we are not the sufferer.

CHAPTER XIV.

Perchance they follow, fair as dreams,
  The rosy morning's flight,
More immaterial than his beams,
  And lighter than his light;
They sit upon the azure day,
They float on twilight's downy gray,
  And on the clouds at night.

O deep and wondrous heart of man,
  Strange fount of joy and woe!
In this sad life no eye may scan
  Thy current's ebb and flow;
But in the glorious world to come,
The voice of discord shall be dumb,
  And thou thyself shalt know.

THE third day after the death of Monsieur Luzerne, the stately funeral procession wended its way from the gloomy old mansion to the cemetery, where, with all the pomp and ceremony enjoined by the Church, the body was deposited in the vault where reposed the ashes of the once beautiful Madame Luzerne — she who had clouded and brightened, by turns, according as the mood of the capricious beauty dictated, the life of him whose body would be placed beside hers and others of the family, who, like themselves, had died

far from their much-loved native land. Dear, sunny France! how many of thy children sleep their last sleep on American soil! Your grave, O noble Luzerne, will not be solitary; for hundreds of others, who, like thee, could boast of a proud lineage, have found their last rest beneath the soil of Louisiana,—De Soto, Tonti, Bienville, and many more, who fell before the sickle of the reaper Death in a strange land; they bear thee company in thy dreamless sleep. *Requiescat in pace.*

It would be impossible to describe the utter loneliness, the wretchedness, of Marie—or Madame Luzerne, as we must, in conformity with the rules of etiquette, call her—after the funeral was over and she returned to her cheerless home.

But the kind, charitable heart of Father S—— did not suffer him to forget one in whom he had taken so deep an interest. During the period which had elapsed since the death of her father-in-law until the day of the funeral, Father S—— had been almost

constantly in the house, and her distress called forth his deepest interest and sympathy. After the funeral, finding out from Marie that she had once been an inmate of the Sisters' school, on C Street, he called there, and received permission for some of Madame Luzerne's old schoolmates to visit her, among others, Josie De La Tour, and, on his return to the old house, was accompanied by Josie. The meeting between the two girls was deeply affecting. But a few brief months ago they had parted, and the meeting brought up to both all the happy, sunny past, in vivid contrast to the dark, hopeless future and the almost agonizing present; for sorrow, even in that brief time, had blighted the young life of Josie De La Tour, and as soon as the period of the novitiate enjoined by the regulations of the Order of St. F—— had elapsed, she would take the vows and become a member of that order. Josie De La Tour was several years Madame Luzerne's senior, and had been placed at school to study some branches

in which her parents imagined she was deficient, and, as they said, learn some dignity from the calm, quiet sisters in whose charge she was placed. Madame Luzerne, as she gazed upon the almost faultlessly beautiful girl, could not forbear exclaiming,—

"Josie De La Tour, a nun! I cannot realize it; you must be dreaming or jesting; you cannot really wish me to believe you are in earnest. My own life, dear friend, seems dreary, miserable enough; but to think of your voluntarily giving up the bright, glorious world you are so fitted to adorn, for the cold, cheerless cell of a nun; oh, I cannot realize the terrible truth; it seems to me perfectly incredible. But tell me, darling, how you were induced to consent to what appears, even to me, so terrible a fate."

"Stop, dear friend," exclaimed Josie; "you are wrong in supposing I have been influenced in deciding upon my vocation in this world. No one has in the slightest degree influenced me; on the contrary, my family were at

first violently opposed to my taking the vow, but finding, after a time, it affected my happiness so much, they gave a reluctant consent. I will tell you, *mon ami*, my reason; and then, I am sure, you will commend me for the course I have taken. When I was about your age, while on a visit home, I made the acquaintance of a gentleman, a friend of papa's — noble, accomplished, fascinating — learned to love him as woman loves but once in a lifetime. Everything progressed smoothly, and that love was suffered to grow and strengthen for three years. Three months ago, that is, about the time of your leaving school, papa came to the school for me, and I returned home with him. During vacation, a large ball was given, and papa and myself attended it. I had been dancing, and my partner in the dance had conducted me to a deep bay-window, and left, at my request, to procure a glass of water for me. The heavy curtains concealed me from view, and it was well they did, for I had not been there long when

Paul Mar, the gentleman of whom I spoke, and who was my betrothed husband, stopped just opposite my place of concealment, and entered into conversation with some acquaintance, who commenced rallying him in regard to his marriage with me; and, Marie, I, an unwilling listener, heard his reply, which congealed the very current of my life.

"'No, my friend; there is where you are very much mistaken. I will acknowledge I did have rather serious intentions there once, but I have found out recently that *pere* De La Tour has not sufficient of the necessary to give to the jewel a golden setting; therefore, I shall draw in my lines and change back;' and the heartless creature, upon whom I had lavished the wealth of a heart's deep love, was turning away, when some one of his friends remarked:

"'But, Paul, how will you get honorably out the affair now, after three years' devoted attention to your divinity; how will you get out of the engagement, for, engaged you no doubt were, long since?'

"'Oh, yes,' replied Paul; 'I always have the luck of getting engaged, and never could carry on a flirtation successfully without implicating myself; but, in this instance, I hang my hopes of getting out of the affair upon the fact of the girl's parents' ignorance of the engagement and her pride; for, the moment she discovers from my manner I wish the affair concealed, her pride will be up in arms in a moment, and the dismissal will come from her, you see. Well, it requires some *finesse* to manage these delicate affairs; but, as this is not my first flirtation, I do not fear but I possess the requisite qualifications for getting released from the engagement, and as yet, I have no particular wish to break with Josie, for until some more desirable star makes its appearance, I shall continue her devoted lover. But, be assured, when I find the engagement is likely to interfere with my success in some other quarter offering golden attraction, I shall make short work of the business;' and with a laugh, Paul Mar left the neigh-

borhood of my concealment, and fortunately so for me. I felt my perfect inability to meet him that evening; and, when a moment after, my friend appeared, I drank the glass of water, and begged to be taken to papa, as I felt quite ill. The gentleman, alarmed at my deathly paleness, complied with my request. We returned home; and, dear friend, I will not attempt to describe to you my suffering, my agony, that night; but Paul Mar had not reckoned too much upon Josie De La Tour's pride; and next morning, even before he had arisen from his sleep after a night of dissipation, he received a letter from me of dismissal, without my assigning any other reason than my resolution to take the vows. You, my friend, are the only one I have ever confided my secret to; and I ask you, how could I go forth into society, and in time bestow my hand on some man to whom, however worthy he might be, I could never give my heart; for I feel how utterly impossible it is to hope a new love could

ever spring up upon the ashes of the old love. The very intensity of my love for Paul Mar, all unworthy as I now know him to be, precludes the possibility of my ever loving again; and why should I remain out in the world, between whom and myself there can be no sympathy, no congeniality? No! I will join the order, and in deeds of charity, in uninterrupted devotion to our religion, I will seek oblivion of the past, and earn a crown of immortality hereafter.

"Do not permit my sad story to add to your unhappiness, my dear friend, for believe me, I am not so very miserable. I shall become reconciled to that life which, no doubt, the will of God ordained for me;" and the calm, holy expression of Josie's beautiful face precluded the possibility of unhappiness or trouble long affecting her perfect peace.

"Yes, beloved Josie, you are right; you have chosen the better part. Far better is it for thee the peaceful, holy life of a sister, than to live in society, and in time

give your hand where you have no heart to give. Oh, there is something to me inexpressibly horrible in a marriage without love! Thank God, Josie, you have had the fortitude to take that only step which precludes the possibility of such a fate being thine! Dear Josie, in the future, when, in some unguarded hour, an evil spirit may tempt thee to wish a happier lot than had been yours, crush that feeling from your heart, and on your knees thank God for sparing you the soul-crushing agony of living an unloved, neglected wife;" and Madame Luzerne's agitation for the first time made Josie suspect her relations with her husband were not happy; for, be it remembered, society is kept in ignorance of the true character of its members—only the fair side is revealed; therefore was Josie De La Tour ignorant of the real cause of her friend's trouble, but supposed her distress was occasioned by the death of Monsieur Luzerne. But the earnestness with which Madame Luzerne spoke led Josie to ask,—

"You, surely, are not unhappy in your marriage relations, my friend? Although I have not the honor of a personal acquaintance with Captain Luzerne, he is, I know, a great favorite in society; and you are the object of no small degree of envy in the possession of so accomplished and fascinating a husband. I sincerely hope, dear friend, you have not met the fate you would so much deplore for me!" — and Josie affectionately embraced Madame Luzerne, whom she had loved when a happy schoolgirl, and who was doubly dear to her now in her sorrow.

"Josie, not even to you can I answer that question. I cannot but think that the confidence of husband and wife should be sacred. Were I to confide the relations existing between my husband and myself to even *you*, my most intimate friend, I feel I should, by so doing, create a gulf which could never be bridged over, but would evermore remain a yawning chasm between us. Because a husband permits himself to

forget the sacred vows he pledged himself at the altar to observe, is no excuse for the wife to forget or disregard the holy obligations which the relations she sustains enjoins upon her; and, believe me, dear Josie, a wife commits a far more terrible sin than her husband possibly could, when she confides her domestic troubles to a third party. A wife, dear friend, should never have any other confidant than her husband. If she, in marriage, makes the fatal mistake, as many do, and there is no sympathy, no congeniality, between them, and her heart is looking for sympathy, she still has one source of consolation — her religion and her confessor; and Heaven never turns a deaf ear to a sorrowing wife's petition for strength to bear her cross."

"Forgive me, dear," exclaimed Josie. "I spoke thoughtlessly. I will not seek to gain your confidence in matters which, as you truly say, should be sacred between you and your husband. But you will, at least, tell me that you love one whom all admire?"

"There again, my Josie," replied Marie, "you are almost treading on forbidden ground; but I will answer your questions. I do love Jean Luzerne as well as I can now ever love any person in this world. One week ago, I madly worshipped him, because I thought him a perfect tower of strength; but now, that I know him capable of all the faults and follies of other men, my feelings are sadly changed. But think, dear Josie, I am as happy as the generality of wives; and we will try to find a more pleasing topic of conversation."

Before Josie De La Tour could reply to her friend's remark, the door leading into the adjoining room opened, and Captain Luzerne entered the room.

CHAPTER XV.

Oh, never despond, whate'er there may be
To ruffle the surface of life's broad sea;
Thy courage let not the angry waves shake,
Harmless around thee the billows will break.

As across the spangled arch of heaven
Clouds of sombre darkness oft are driven,
So oft across the pathway of the soul
Clouds of sorrow like billows darkly roll,

MADAME Luzerne and Josie were both quite surprised to see Captain Luzerne, for had they been aware of his proximity to them, their conversation would have been of a very different nature from what it had been. He did not appear very well satisfied with what he heard, for, seating himself opposite his wife, he exclaimed, —

"I have not, believe me, been a willing listener to your conversation. I was in the adjoining room asleep upon a sofa, when I was awakened by the sound of voices, and finally heard my own name mentioned, and heard Mademoiselle De La Tour's remark in regard to my position in society. But, Madame Luzerne, tell me why it is your

feelings are changed. I know there is something wrong. I felt that, the night my poor father died, and your words to your friend confirm the truth of suspicions. That night my father died, Marie, I would have given worlds to have been sure I possessed your love. But I have, from some cause, lost the jewel I unknowingly possessed. Now it is, I fear, too late to render myself worthy that priceless jewel — a true, pure woman's love — without which all things else are worthless. Marie, my wife, can you not forget all my past cruelty and unkindness, and give me your love? Believe me, I will strive to be worthy of so inestimable a blessing. By your love for my father, I entreat you to forget, forgive the past; assist me in becoming all you would have me be; and, with God's help, you will find me a willing pupil. Beware — for God's sake, beware — how you answer: my soul's salvation depends upon it." And Captain Luzerne, the seemingly heartless man, who, but a few months since, cast his wife from him

when she knelt, imploring his love, now knelt, when too late, at *her* feet, and with burning tears implored her *love*, her *pity!*

"Jean Luzerne, arise," exclaimed Marie; "if you do love me — if you would ever hope for my love being yours again, never again sue for it in this abject manner. I did love you devotedly, unselfishly; but that is past. I then believed you worthy of an angel's love. I looked *up* to you. I felt so utterly unworthy of your love, I despaired of ever gaining it. But that time can never be recalled; something *has* transpired which had almost entirely destroyed my respect for you. What caused this change you must not ask; you can never know from me. Would to heaven I could change myself — give my love where I cannot my respect — but that is impossible. But I promise you to be a sincere friend, to assist in every way in my feeble power to make you what I once thought you; but, Jean Luzerne, the terrible shock my love has received precludes the possibility

of its ever blooming again in my heart. My pity, sympathy, and my undivided duty as a wife, are yours: ask no more." But, notwithstanding her seemingly cold words, tears of *pity* fell from Marie's eyes as she kissed the brow of Captain Luzerne.

"Madame Luzerne, think you, cold *pity*, *sympathy*, such as you offer me, can ever reform a man so deeply steeped in sin and guilt as I am? Oh, I thought you could give me the only love that could bring about this reformation, which fierce, passionate and steadfast, resembling the mountain's torrent, sweeping everything from its pathway, and true, and deep, and unchangeable as old ocean itself; this is the love I ask of you; this is the love I could give in return. Think again, it is not too late." And Captain Luzerne arose, and taking the hand of his wife, anxiously awaited her reply.

"Jean! I implore you, ask no more that question. I cannot love you as you wish now; I may in time. I could deceive you

now, by falsely assuring you as you wish me; but I cannot widen the gulf between us by speaking an untruth. For the present, at least, my decision is irrevocable; and I will not delude you with what may never be realized in the future. I fear I never again can love you as you would wish to be loved — as I once could and did love you;" and never did Marie Luzerne appear more beautiful than at that moment, as she stood before her husband, her large, dark eyes swimming in tears. But, alas! her beauty, her intellect, her *heart*, was of that pure, ethereal, unapproachable nature, which could not bend from its lofty height to hold communion with an inferior nature. While she believed her husband pure and honorable, she could endure his unkindness; could hear with patience his terrible outbursts of temper. But now, the charm was broken; his true character stood revealed to her; and love had forever died out from her heart, unable to survive respect.

"Well, it is useless longer to entreat you,"

exclaimed Luzerne; "I only hope you will not live to regret the decision of this hour!" and Captain Luzerne left the house to go on board his ship, to brood over his troubles. But he would not long be alone there; for soon Julie De Bourghe would come to mingle her passionate tears with his, and to make him, for the time being, oblivious of the painful interview we have just recorded. O wife of Jean Luzerne! you should have been more earthly in your nature, more woman, and Jean Luzerne might, in time, have been all you could have desired him to be. But so completely enveloped in her own and her relative's exalted ideas of honor, she could not realize this, and the fatal mistake was made; and too late would Marie Luzerne realize the terrible result of her decision of that hour.

CHAPTER XVI.

When sorrows come, they come not as single spies,
But in battalions.

JOSIE De La Tour, who had witnessed with painful surprise the distressing scene we narrated in our last chapter, the moment Captain Luzerne left the room, rushed across to where Madame Luzerne sat, and kneeling at her feet, implored her to recall her words — to permit her to call Captain Luzerne back again.

"No," replied Madame Luzerne, in answer to her entreaties. "I cannot do a wrong — I cannot speak words my heart does not sanction, merely that good may come out of my so doing. You may think me puritanical, dear Josie, in my ideas, provided I do not offer an explanation of the painful scene this morning. I will endeavor to do so; and, if possible, make you understand how perfectly impossible it was for me to have answered my husband as he desired I should. I may be wrong; but I think had I, even

to satisfy him for the time, spoken falsely, I should have been forever unworthy his confidence or respect. You know me, Josie; you know that I am not heartless, I am not unfeeling; therefore, you can realize how much it pained me, to answer my husband as I did. But, believe me, I could not do otherwise, and be true to honor and truth. I cannot give my reasons why and wherefore, without making a confidant of you in matters which I feel I should not confide even to a mother, had I been so blessed as to possess one; but I can, dear friend, mention a case which I think analagous to mine. Could you, were Paul Mar to kneel at your feet, and implore the restoration of your respect and love, could Josie De La Tour place her hand in his, and tell him the past was forgotten; that she loved and respected him as before the discovery of his real perfidious character?"—and Madame Luzerne looked searchingly into the face gazing upon her so earnestly.

"No, Marie Luzerne!" exclaimed Josie;

you well know I could not say those words — speaking falsely. Where confidence and respect do not exist, it is madness and folly to think pure, holy, heaven-born love can, without these essential requisites to its life. Some persons will contend that I am wrong in this; that woman's love should be so strong, so faithful and constant, that it could survive the disgrace, dishonor, and worldly ruin of the object of its adoration. But I say to you, my friend, a love that can exist where respect and confidence are not, is no love at all, but mere animal passion. While I believed Paul Mar noble and honorable, my love for him could have survived all the contumely, dishonor, and worldly ruin society could have heaped upon him. It would have followed him to the scaffold, and even been faithful after death; but, the moment my confidence in him was destroyed, that moment love died out forever from my heart. Were I a man, I would have no faith in a woman's truth or virtue who professed to love really and

truly, where she *knew* the object of her love unworthy her confidence and esteem."

"You have given expression to my own sentiments exactly, my dear Josie," replied Madame Luzerne; "and although I cannot give you an explanation of the motives for my conduct this morning, believe me, my friend, I was actuated throughout by principles of honor and right. I believe, Josie, as I am confident you do, that good, pure women, often love unworthy objects; or rather, they love an ideal, and they themselves, and the world give them the credit of loving flesh and blood; for poor, romantic woman is so given to idealizing, that she, by her strong imagination, creates an object worthy an angel's love and admiration, and she gives this mere *ideality* form and reality in the person of some man, to whom she bows down in humble worship and reverence. Sometimes the charm is not broken, the illusion not dispelled, and she lives, and finally dies, in happy ignorance of the truth, that she has not given her love to

flesh and blood, but only to an ideal — a mere creation of the imagination. O blissful dream! O happy delusion! would that it had pleased heaven that you and I could have so lived and died!"

"But as it was not the will of heaven that your wish should be granted, my child, seek strength to bear your heavy cross and resignation from that heaven which you have invoked;" and, even before Josie and Madame Luzerne could turn their eyes in the direction of the door, they recognized, in the voice of the speaker, the sweet, solemn tones of Father S——, who had returned to Josie, and entered the room unknown to its occupants, in time to hear the last remark of Madame Luzerne.

"Father," replied Madame Luzerne, "I have, and will continue to obey your injunctions, to implore strength from heaven; otherwise I could not endure, with even the fortitude I have, the accumulated sorrows through which I have passed, and which burst upon me like some terrible avalanche,

and found me so totally unprepared to endure its fury. But, father, you look unusually serious; has anything occurred to give occasion for it?" — and Madame Luzerne looked into the face of the good old man with affectionate solicitude.

"Nothing, my child," replied Father S——, "has occurred but what I should have expected, and therefore been prepared for; but still, the information I received this morning from your husband, of his intention to take you to sea with him, does cause me some anxiety in regard to your future welfare. Will you, my child, be able to so successfully contend with your hard destiny, when entirely separated from your church and religious influences?"

"What difference can it possibly make," replied Madame Luzerne, in answer to the priest's question, "where I am? — whether upon sea or land, I can and will be a Catholic still. The powers of darkness cannot, shall not, make me forget my duty to my religion and my family. And then,

father, I will be in port at least once a month, and of course I shall, at such times, attend church. Do you not know, father, that my religion is a part almost of my very life; and, do you know, I almost wish I were in Josie's place; but then it was not God's will, and I must be resigned to my lot."

"And now, my child," said Father S——, as he arose to take his leave, "I must take Mademoiselle De La Tour back to the Sisters, and then return home, for I have been absent the greater part of the day; but I will see you again before you go away, and possibly bring your friend again to see you." And never did good old Father S—— bestow a more fervent blessing upon any one than that which he gave to Madame Luzerne in parting.

"Farewell, dear Marie! and be of good cheer. Do not permit yourself to despond. You know there may be some avenue of escape yet from this trouble and care which is weighing you down to earth. Try to let

deeds of charity, your duty to your fellow-beings, so engross your thoughts that you cannot have time to brood over your sorrows. Again, my sweet friend, farewell; may heaven bless and make you happy;" and Josie De La Tour and Father S—— left the house, and Marie Luzerne was again left alone with her destiny.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, "would that even dear old mammy were here to help me bear all this trouble; dear, faithful mammy, how I do wish you were here."

"An' does my chile want ole mammy? an' if she does, ole mammy not sorry she cum, for all de sea-sickness and eberyting couldn't keep her way nohow." But long before the speaker could utter half the words we have recorded, Madame Luzerne had recognized her nurse, and was sobbing in her arms.

"Mammy, darling mammy, how did you get here; when did you come; and are they all well at dear old Seviere Place?" And, seating poor old Eda, Madame Luzerne knelt

beside her with her arms clasped around her, as if fearful her treasure would take wings and vanish.

"Dear chile, you is not one bit changed; you always like to question in dat way — all to once. First, dey is all well at ole massa's dat's libin'; you know, ob course, ole massa an' missus done gone, an' my po' ole man, Jim, he dead, too — couldn't bar massa's deff. Den you wants to know how I cum. Why, didn't Massa Captain tell you I was comin'? You see, he done write Massa Tonie 'bout tree weeks ago, to let me come to you so soon as I could. I gits ready an' cum; an' here, you knows nothin' 'tall 'bout it — dat's mighty funny, chile;" and old Eda looked anxiously at her young mistress, as if she would there find out what she was desirous of knowing, yet feared to ask — if her idolized Marie was happy.

"Mammy, you must not ask me any questions in regard to my life since my marriage. My husband was wishing, no

doubt, to give me this agreeable surprise, and that was his motive for not telling me about your coming. I have two faithful servants here, Nina and Taylor; but I have missed you very much, dear old mammy. But you must remember never to interfere, if you see Captain Luzerne angry and hear him speak crossly to me, for he is usually kind; but your interfering would only make things worse;" and calling Nina, Madame Luzerne gave Eda into her charge, and she had scarcely left the room when Captain Luzerne returned.

CHAPTER XVII.

This it is to feel uncared for,
Like a useless wayside stone;
This it is to walk in spirit
Through the world "alone."

THE moment Captain Luzerne entered the room, Marie ran to him, and clasping his hand, in her old impulsive, enthusiastic manner, poured forth her thanks for his kindness in sending for Eda.

"There, that will do, Madame Luzerne," said he; "I cannot receive your thanks for an act which now, could I recall it, I would not do. Eda is here because I sent for her, and she can stay; do not annoy me any more now, and prepare to go on board the ship tomorrow. I am not particular about your company, only I cannot leave you here without other protection than that of the servants;" and Captain Luzerne turned coldly away from his wife and passed on into the library.

"Why do I feel thus toward that man?

Do I still love him?" exclaimed Madame Luzerne, the moment the Captain left the room. "I cannot account for the feeling of pain his coldness toward me causes. I do not love him; yet I cannot receive coldness or neglect from him without pain amounting to agony. At last, I shall go to sea; be upon the glorious old ocean. But how selfish I am. I cannot take Mammy Eda with me, and it will give her affectionate heart so much pain to part with me again. I cannot take mammy with me, for she dislikes the confinement of a ship, and she will suffer from sea-sickness; and then, Nina has been to sea, and she would gladly go with me, and Lida and Taylor will take good care of Mammy Eda until my return. But it is time I was making preparations for our departure;" and Madame Luzerne went to her room and rang the bell for Nina. In a moment, the faithful girl appeared, when she sent for Taylor, and Lida, and Eda, and informed them of her intention to go away with Captain Luzerne on the mor-

row, and commending Eda to the care of Lida and Taylor during her absence. She partially reconciled Eda to the separation by telling her she wished her to assist Lida in restoring the house to order by the time she returned. To this, Eda replied: —

"Miss Marie knows ole mammy will do anyting she can, but it 'pears to me like eberyting agin me bein wid you ebber any mo';" and the old woman left the presence of Madame Luzerne, to first find relief from her disappointment in a passionate fit of weeping; next, to set about what would appear to a person of a less sanguine temperament than Eda's, a hopeless task, of restoring the old house to something like order; for, be it remembered, our heroine did not understand much about the mysteries of housekeeping; therefore Lida had reigned supreme after the advent of her young master's wife in the house, as she had done for many years previously. And Madame Luzerne, conscious of her perfect inability to very much better the condition

of affairs, did not think it worth her while to interfere or dispute her way; and the condition of the house can better be imagined than described, especially to a housekeeper — a southern housekeeper — only too familiar with the careless, slovenly habits of negroes, renders a description of the general appearance of the house of Madame Luzerne superfluous. But the fortunate arrival of Eda gave to her young mistress a competent and willing auxiliary in the onerous task of cleaning the old building from the accumulated cobwebs and dust of years. Eda only awaited the departure of Madame Luzerne, to commence the work before her. Some of the most critical of my readers may ask, from whom was the old woman to procure the money necessary to restore the old building to comfort and elegance? Before we proceed further, we will answer that very reasonable question.

Gerald Clifton was a lawyer, and was also acquainted with Antoine Lafourche, to whom he had written frequently in regard

to the state of affairs since Marie's marriage, and Antoine had commissioned him to see that his cousin had all that necessity demanded, and, as far as possible, the luxuries to which she had been accustomed. But to assist Madame Luzerne, it was necessary to have Eda with her, because it must all be done secretly; and, although but a negro, both Antoine and Gerald Clifton had implicit confidence in her prudence and discretion. To Gerald Clifton, therefore, was old Eda to apply for the means of restoring the home of her young mistress to something like the appearance it had worn in the days when the mother of Jean Luzerne had lived and ruled there.

But we will see our heroine well off upon the voyage before we enter into the details and carrying out of the plans for the comfort and happiness of Marie Luzerne, conceived and brought into effect by her noble and generous-hearted relatives.

Madame Luzerne sent Taylor to inform Father S—— and Josie De La Tour of her

proposed departure on the morrow from New Orleans, and had the pleasure, the morning she went on board the ship, of receiving a farewell visit from them.

"You must not, my child, forget your promise of being a good Catholic during your absence," said Father S——, in parting. "Captain Luzerne informs me you will possibly be absent some time from this city; that you go to Europe, and may make several voyages between New York and Liverpool before you return here again. If such is the case, it will be some time before you return home again; but, in all your troubles, never forget, that in perfect resignation to the will of God, in firm faith in the religion of Jesus Christ, there is a balm for every woe."

"I will not forget your injunctions, father, believe me," replied Madame Luzerne, deeply affected by the sympathy of the priest and his interest in her happiness; "and I will continue to seek strength and consolation from the only source from whence I can

hope to receive it. But once more give me your blessing; and will you not promise to sometimes remember me, when I may possibly be at the mercy of the waves, in some terrible storm, far out upon the ocean?"

"Yes, my child, never will I officiate at the holy mass without my sending up to heaven petitions for your safety; and, should it be God's will that you find a grave beneath the mighty waters of the great ocean, believe me, if your soul does not find peace in heaven, it will not be through any fault of mine; it will not be because I have not prayed to heaven for you;" and while Madame Luzerne knelt before him, the aged priest raised his hands and devoutly invoked Heaven's blessing upon her.

The priest and Josie De La Tour departed, and Marie hastened her preparation for her voyage. At last, all was ready, and the farewells spoken to her faithful servants; and, accompanied by Captain Luzerne, Marie went on board the ship, where, less than

five months before, she had made the fatal promise of becoming the wife of Jean Luzerne.

The vessel that evening left the port, and next morning, when Nina called her young mistress, they were out of the river, and when Madame Luzerne went upon deck, she found that the noble vessel was ploughing the waters of the great Gulf of Mexico. The sun was shining brightly, and Madame Luzerne was almost as happy as when she roamed through the woods of Seviere Place. She was seated near the stern of the vessel, gazing out upon the great expanse of water, sparkling like diamonds in the glorious sunlight.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Another looming cloud sweeps on,
Enshrouding from my eager view
The fancied smile, — the flashing star,
And its pure home in boundless blue.

AS Madame Luzerne sat thus, lost in thought, oblivious for the time of every earthly care and sorrow, Henri Adrian, the purser of the ship, a noble, kind-hearted young man, stood looking upon her. As he was standing studying the fair face of his Captain's young wife, he was joined by the chief engineer, Mr. Murray.

So completely absorbed in thought was Henri Adrian, that he was not aware of the presence of Murray until that individual, slapping him familiarly on the shoulder, exclaimed, —

"Why, Henri, are you in love already with our Captain's wife; or, is her beauty so subtle in its power that it can entrance you so completely that you are oblivious of the very existence of your friends?"

"No, Ned Murray," replied Henri; "such an idea as being in love with the lady you allude to never really entered my head. That dark, passionate, masculine-looking woman could never inspire a sentiment of love in my heart, believe me; but I was thinking what caused the sorrowful expression upon the sweet, pure, truthful face of the young girl who is seated yonder near the bulwark of the ship. The expression of her face is unusual for a person so young as she appears, and it has awakened my deepest sympathy and interest. Who is she? do you know? She came on board with the Captain yesterday, and as he gave orders for her to have the best accommodations the ship afforded, I supposed she was some relative of his or his wife's. But what are you laughing at? What have I said to occasion it?" — and Henri Adrian looked at his companion in surprise.

"Why, Adrian, when you know the ridiculous mistake you have made, you will laugh," replied Ned Murray. "Why, do you

not know that that is the wife of Captain Luzerne sitting yonder? She is the niece of one of the wealthiest planters in Texas, or, rather, was, for her uncle is dead, and her brother is almost a millionaire. When the Captain married her, he supposed she would bring him a large fortune. You see, it was not a love match, on his part, at least. I cannot answer as to what motives influenced my proud little lady yonder;" and the engineer was turning away, when Henri Adrian stopped him by asking, —

"But tell me who that woman is who occupies the Captain's cabin. I thought she was his wife, for, if she is not, she should be. Your story shocks me beyond measure. I had no idea that Captain Luzerne was a person of the principle I can but infer from your remark he is. You know my acquaintance with him is very limited, but his position with men in our profession, and even the best society, is an honorable one, so far as I ever heard, and it pains me, even thus early in our acquaintance, to

cherish a single doubt of his honor or truth. Oblige me, Murray, by answering my question, Who is the woman who last night occupied Captain Luzerne's cabin, if the beautiful girl yonder is his wife?" — and the earnestness with which Henri Adrian asked the question betrayed his deep interest in the subject of conversation. With another laugh, the engineer answered: —

"Why, is it possible you do not know all about this business? If you had been with Luzerne as long as I have, these questions would have been unnecessary. Well, the woman you allude to is the mistress of our captain, and if he ever loved any one, it is her; and I think it very fortunate that you have taken a fancy to the wife instead of the mistress, or you would have stood a pretty fair chance of being transferred to Davy Jones's locker before this voyage is completed. As the case stands, it is my impression his honor will have to be imperiled, before he will manifest hostilities for any gallantries toward his wife. I

should not be particularly anxious to rival him with the fair Julie, unless I cherished a wish to be made a dinner of by the sharks. But I know something about this affair, that I am sure not even Captain Luzerne is aware of. It is this: Some time since, for some trifling cause, he discharged Kingsley, the mate. Well, of course, Kingsley and his wife did not bear the loss of his situation with patience, and a desire for revenge upon Captain Luzerne prompted them to not only tell Madame Luzerne about the intimacy of her husband and Julie De Bourghe, but Mrs. Kingsley positively went with Madame Luzerne to the house of Julie one evening, when the Captain was there; and, of course, she knows all about the affair, for Kingsley himself told me this. He further stated that Madame only went with his wife expecting to prove to them that they had misinformed her in regard to the business; that Madame Luzerne fainted when she saw Julie De Bourghe in the Captain's arms. I wonder if she knows her

rival is on board the ship?" and, as Murray was turning to go forward, he confronted Captain Luzerne, who had undoubtedly overheard the latter part of his discourse.

"Gentlemen," angrily exclaimed Captain Luzerne, "my personal affairs seem to have been the subject of discussion between you, and, unwittingly, I overheard the remark of Mr. Murray in regard to Kingsley betraying to Madame Luzerne my relations with Julie De Bourghe. Would to heaven I had known this before we left New Orleans; but, even now, with your assistance, it is not too late;" and for one moment, good and evil seemed struggling for predominancy in the heart of Captain Luzerne; and the expression of his face gave evidence of the contending emotions in his heart.

"Captain, you know you have but to command, and I will serve you to the extent of my ability," obsequiously replied the engineer.

"If I can render any assistance in sending this woman back to New Orleans, where

she belongs, I shall be most happy to do so, and you may rely on my services," exclaimed the noble young purser.

"You speak boldly, young man," replied Captain Luzerne, his face again slightly flushing with shame and anger; "but that was what I myself was going to propose. In a few minutes our pilot leaves us. Julie can return in the boat with him, or rather, she must return. You, Mr. Adrian, come with me, and I will introduce you to my wife. You must make an excuse to get her below in the cabin, while Murray and myself see the pilot and Julie safely on their way back to New Orleans."

In less time than it takes to relate it, everything was done that Captain Luzerne had proposed. Julie De Bourghe left the vessel, breathing vows of revenge against Captain Luzerne, and no one who looked upon that terrible passionate face could for a moment doubt her will to put her threats into execution. After she was gone, as Captain Luzerne was slowly walking back

and forth upon the deck of the vessel, he was joined by Henri Adrian.

"Thank God she is gone, Adrian, and never again shall my noble young wife have cause to doubt my love for her. And now I will explain to you how it was that I brought them both on board the ship. Several days ago, I happened to overhear my wife telling a young friend of hers that she no longer loved me, as she had previously done. From some cause, I never appreciated my wife's noble qualities of mind and heart until about the time of my father's death; since that time, the desire to possess her love has been paramount to every other feeling. The syren spell by which Julie held me captive was dispelled, and you can imagine my feelings when I heard the remark of my wife to her friend. I kneeled at her feet and implored her love, but she turned coldly from me, and now I am aware of the cause of her so doing. But her turning from me in the manner in which she did, made me, at the time, perfectly

reckless; and on coming aboard the ship, I was joined soon after by Julie De Bourghe, and lent a willing ear to her entreaties that she might accompany me on this voyage. Thinking my wife had, without sufficient reason, given me pain, I did not hesitate a moment in consenting to Julie's plan to come with me. But now I am only too thankful that she is gone before Madame Luzerne knew of her presence on board the ship, and never, of my own free will, shall Julie De Bourghe and myself meet again; and, I will, with heaven's assistance, yet make myself worthy of my wife's love and forgiveness. But I fear it is too late, for I know she inherits the pure, exalted ideas of honor and principle which are characteristic of her family, and fear it is now useless to hope for her love ever again being mine; but I feel now that I would rather have her pity and sympathy, than any other woman's love;" and tears rolled down the cheeks of the Captain. And was this the heartless, unprincipled libertine of only a

few, brief weeks previous? Impossible! exclaims some incredulous reader; no woman, however spotless and pure she might be, could have, in so short a time, converted such a man into the weeping penitent of the time we are speaking. But such, dear reader, was really and truly the fact.

"Captain, my noble Captain, do not despair," exclaimed Henri, deeply affected by the Captain's distress; "you may yet succeed in gaining the love of Madame Luzerne. She is not heartless; and when she is once confident that you are sincere in your desires to reform, the past will be forgotten."

"Would that I could have faith in the fulfilment of your prophecy," replied Captain Luzerne; "but I know her nature now only too well. Her kind, sympathetic heart might dictate my pardon and restoration to the place I once occupied in her affections, but her reason and intellect will oppose it, and they will gain the victory over the heart. That priceless jewel, the love of

my pure, darling little wife, is forever and hopelessly lost to me. But I thank you, Adrian, for your sympathy; and had I always associated with such men as yourself, I might not now have been the unhappy wretch that I am."

"Captain, do not, I entreat you," exclaimed Henri, "give up thus to this gloomy despondency. You can yet, by kindness, win your wife's love, and by being strictly honorable and virtuous, regain your place in her esteem and respect; but here is a more efficient comforter than myself. Madame, the Captain is very low-spirited today; will you not exert your powers of consolation in putting to flight the unwelcome intruders?" — and Henri arose and offered a seat by the Captain's side to Madame Luzerne, who just at that moment came upon deck. Without waiting for her reply, Henri hastily left them, to go to another part of the ship; and the husband and wife were alone together.

CHAPTER XIX.

The lady's heart aches but to weep,
  As clouds will ache with showers,
Till forth some new emotions leap
  As sunshine comes to flowers;
She knew not angels long abide
  Such weary search with sadness,
And when we put it all aside,
  They fill our souls with gladness.

AGAIN the evil genius of the young wife whispered in her ear that it was not repentance for past misdeeds and unkindness to herself that caused his present sorrow, but grief at leaving New Orleans and Julie De Bourghe for an indefinite period; and again would Marie Luzerne have turned coldly away from her husband; but as she was preparing to leave the deck for the cabin, she met the look of entreaty upon the face of Henri Adrian, who had returned again to where they were sitting. When Madame Luzerne met the look directed toward her, of almost agonized entreaty, she returned, and, taking the hand of Captain Luzerne, kindly requested him to retire to his cabin with her, as some

of the passengers had come up from the cabin, and were promenading the deck. When the Captain and his wife disappeared within the tiny cabin, the young purser breathed a sigh of relief.

"Oh!" exclaimed he, "if she was less pure, less faultless herself, I would be more hopeful of seeing Captain Luzerne what God intended he should be, a noble, pure principled man;" and tears were flowing from the eyes of Henri, when he was accosted by Ned Murray, the engineer.

"Hello, Adrian, what! weeping over our Captain's short-lived repentance? Well, if you think his penitence will be permanent, I have given you credit for more sense than you really possess. Why, it will be the same thing over again, the moment we return to New Orleans. Julie and the Captain will make friends again, I am confident;" and the man, not finding the purser disposed to enter into conversation with him, walked away to the bow of the vessel. Ned Murray, although a very competent

engineer, was a man of little principle, no sensibility or refinement, and as a climax to his disagreeable qualifications, he was a person who was on very good terms with himself; and his fondness for spinning long yarns, in which he himself performed wonderful feats of daring, made him a perfect bore to his messmates. But Murray's disgusting vanity and ignorant vulgarity did not permit him to see and understand the smile of incredulity, and the glances and ill-suppressed ridicule which ever greeted the conclusion of his tedious "yarns." No, as an old tar once remarked, "he had spun his yarns so often, that he had come to believe them himself."

We have taken the trouble, dear reader, to render you acquainted with the character of this man, because we will have occasion in the future to bring him before our readers.

"Hello, Mr. Murray," exclaimed the mate, as he threw himself down upon the deck near where the engineer stood, "cannot you

spin us a short yarn? We have a few minutes of leisure, and not wishing to sleep, we thought we would call upon you to entertain us;" and many were the sly winks and significant "nods" that passed between the old tars as Murray seated himself preparatory to commencing his story, while a self-satisfied smile overspread his countenance.

"Well, messmates," commenced Murray, "I cannot think of anything just now of interest; but, did I ever tell you of the time when I was in ship H——? You see, I run mate of her then; that was years ago. Well, once when we were in the New-Orleans and Liverpool trade, we had reached midocean, upon our return trip, when the sailors mutinied, and refused to work any more. I was asleep at the time, but some one awakened me and told me of what was going on. I rushed on deck and found the captain there, white as a sheet, and shaking like a person with the ague. I told him to go below, which he immediately did, when I drew two revolvers from my pockets,

and told the men I would shoot the first man who refused to go to work and obey orders. I soon had everything going on smoothly, when I had the steward to give all the men a double allowance of grog. We did not have any further trouble with them during the voyage, and, indeed, in any of the subsequent voyages we made together. For months after, the captain would tell passengers that my bravery and intrepidity saved his life, and prevented the ship from falling into the hands of mutineers."

"Gad, you must have been a devil of a fellow — but, ho-o-o, all hands aft to furl the main-sail!" and, with a loud laugh, the old tar trudged off to superintend the furling of the sail.

Left to his own resources for amusement, Murray again sought young Adrian, whom he found still seated near the bulwarks, apparently in deep thought; and just at that moment, could his own wishes have been gratified, Murray was the last person in the

vessel whose company he would have at that moment desired. At times, he almost heartily despised Murray, and more especially did he feel his annoyance, when, as in the present instance, he desired to reflect, and would not willingly have been disturbed by any one, especially by Murray. But the almost insulting coldness of his reception did not deter him from entering into conversation with Henri.

"Have you seen the Captain since you placed him upon the stool of repentance?" he asked in a loud voice, and laughing at the same time. "Why," continued he, "you should become a missionary, you are so successful making converts. But I should think, instead of looking so gloomy, you would be rejoicing."

Deeply annoyed by the man's insolence and vulgarity, Henri replied: —

"I do not fancy, Mr. Murray, that Captain Luzerne wishes his private business, which concerns neither you nor myself, discussed here in public. You will there-

fore oblige me by not alluding to his affairs again, at least, in addressing me;" and casting a look of contempt at Murray, Henri walked away from him without giving him an opportunity of replying.

And now, kind reader, we will enter the little cabin, devoted exclusively to the Captain, and see how affairs are progressing between the husband and wife. For some time after entering the cabin, and seating themselves there, the silence was unbroken by either. At length, Madame Luzerne asked, —

"Has anything occurred, Captain Luzerne, to render you unhappy, or to cause you trouble? If so, can you not tell me?" for, be it remembered, Madame Luzerne was ignorant of the fact of Julie De Bourghe having been on board the ship.

"Nothing has occurred, my dear Marie, but what I should have surmised several days ago. But now that the knowledge has come, it makes me realize so acutely the wide, wide gulf between us — the fearful

chasm that separates me from your love;" and on his knees before her, with his arms clasped around her slight form, the Captain told his wife what he that morning discovered in regard to her knowledge of his criminal, unholy relations with Julie De Bourghe, and the whole history of their intercourse, and finally, of his now perfect hopelessness of ever again possessing her love; and then burning tears of agony, wrung from his proud heart by distress, fell from his eyes upon the small, white hands of his wife. Antoine Lafourche, you should have seen Jean Luzerne at that moment, and pity and forgiveness would have taken the place of hatred in your heart. Madame Luzerne was deeply affected by the Captain's distress, and for some minutes the romantic dream of her girlhood, the prejudices of education, her disappointment in her husband's not realizing her ideal of perfection, all seemed likely to be swept away and forgotten, in her earnest desire for peace and reconciliation between them,

and her yearning for love and sympathy. But the terrible, bitter disappointment was not so soon to be forgotten and forgiven.

"My dear husband," at length she said; "I cannot, as I before told you, so soon forget the shock my love and confidence in you have received; but, believe me, I rejoice in your repentance, and when we return to New Orleans, seek advice from good old Father S——, and peace and comfort will come to you very soon on your return to your duty in our holy religion. If I do not love you quite so devotedly and blindly as once I did, the consciousness of doing right, will, of itself, make you happy; and then, if you are good, I shall be compelled to love you very dearly;" and smiling through her tears, Mâdame Luzerne imprinted a fervent kiss of reconciliation upon the lips of Jean Luzerne. A short time after, the Captain was called to go forward to attend to something in regard to the management of the vessel, and the young wife was left to commune with

her own thoughts; and sad companions they were, too, at that moment.

"It is very evident," she soliloquized, that I will have to bear the burden of life alone; I cannot make him understand how perfectly impossible it is for me to love him as I once did. But I will, and must try to forget the past; to assist him in his efforts to live a good and virtuous life;" and Madame Luzerne's sweet, young face assumed a happier expression than it had worn for months past; and when Jean Luzerne returned to the cabin, he could not understand how it was that he did not from the first love his pure, truthful little wife.

The kind heart of Henri Adrian was filled with inexpressible gratitude that evening on beholding the Captain and his wife promenading the deck; his tall, noble form contrasting so agreeably with the slight, delicate little creature at his side.

"The sun was shining forth after the storm; heaven grant they may have no

more clouds," sighed Henri Adrian; and he went away to his lonely state-room, unable to witness the Captain's happiness in the possession of one whom he had, even in their short acquaintance, learned to love — as persons of his temperament love but once in a lifetime.

CHAPTER XX.

Your soul is full of future hopes,
  Which yet are all untried;
Mine is a sepulchre of those
  Which bloomed awhile, *then died.*
The wings of Faith, and Trust, and Love,
  Are o'er your pathway spread;
While like the fruit of the Dead Sea,
  Mine lay in ashes— *dead.*

E will now, dear reader, return to old Mammy Eda, and see how she is progressing in the almost herculean task of restoring the home of her young mistress to something like order.

Gerald Clifton lent his assistance and advice whenever they were called into requisition, and the work progressed rapidly. The house itself, a large brick building, with marble front, must have been magnificent once, but now, through time and neglect, was sadly out of repair. But masons, carpenters, and painters, can work wonders; and in a very short time, the crumbling walls were repaired and painted; the fences and the wood-work of the interior of the building restored to even more

than their pristine glory. The faded, moth-eaten hangings were torn from the walls, and replaced by more modern paper, of rich and elegant design. The first floor was divided thus: A side-hall passed through the house, and at either end of the hall were doors opening upon a gallery. Upon the first floor were the long suite of parlors, with their lofty ceilings, faded tapestry, and moth-eaten furniture. On the opposite side of the hall from the parlors were the dining-room and library. The immense dining-hall, with its quaint old pictures of hunting scenes, had been, with the parlors, almost entirely unoccupied for years, — the library being the ordinary sitting-room of Monsieur Luzerne and the Captain. The ancient carpeting of the library and parlors was now taken up, and after being relieved of the dust accumulated, were placed upon the floors of the chambers; while their places in the parlors were supplied by Brussels, of the most exquisite pattern, and that of the library by an ingrain rich in color and

of heavy texture. The furniture, of solid mahogany, was newly covered with rich crimson velvet by the skilful hands of workmen. The once beautiful damask curtains, with their silken linings now faded and defaced by long use, were taken down, and their places supplied by others rich and lovely as the former had ever been. Even the kitchen and dining-room were newly fitted up and refurnished; but that delightful old library, with its countless volumes of ancient lore, it, if possible, was rendered more charming than all the others. The shelves and books were dusted, and many of the volumes were newly bound, and at last, all was completed; the carpets down, books put in their place, curtains hung up, furniture newly covered, and the parlors and library did indeed present a magnificent appearance.

One day, just before the completion of the work, Gerald Clifton called at the house to see how affairs were progressing. He was quite surprised to hear loud and angry

voices in the dining-room. Pausing a moment in the library, he soon learned the cause of the disturbance.

Lida, the old negro woman we have spoken of in a previous chapter, who had held complete sway in the house for years, did not fancy the idea of being superseded now by Eda. Greatly amused, Gerald listened to the following colloquy between the two candidates for power: —

"I tell you what it is, ole nigga," exclaimed Lida; "I don't like fur to be imperlite to a visitor in de house, an' dat one dat my young missus 'mended to my charge; but right is right, an' I tell you, I is allers bin use fur to have anyting I wants; an', as you don't belong hur, what fur you meddle 'bout tings what don't concern you? I wants you to 'member, nigga, my missus lef you in my care as a visitor, an' I wants you to 'have yersef 'cordin; so dar, dats all I is got to say."

"Why, nigga, a pusson to hear you talk, might tink you is somebody," replied Eda;

"don't you understan' de difference 'tween a nuss an' a cook? Why, nigga, a cook is nobody 'pared with de nuss. Den you speaks 'bout my chile jes like she 'longs to you. Don't you know, I raise dat chile; and when she went away, she tell dis nigga to see dat tings went on 'bout right; an' dis chile going to see dat tings is kep a little mo' straight. Now, nigga, don't let dis chile ketch you in dat storeroom any mo', stealing sugar an' tings out dar fur your nigga frens."

"Dar, nigga, you has sed nuff," angrily exclaimed Lida. "Don't you know when young lady marries, she belongs to de family dat she marries into, an' so you has no claims tall upon her. Den I was alis fust here, and I tend to be so yet, cause my young massa will see dat I is; so, ole nigga, mine your own business."

It is very probable the difficulty would have ended in a regular battle, but for the timely interference of Gerald Clifton, who persuaded them to take each her own sepa-

rate department, and wait to have the questions of superiority decided until the return of their master and mistress. At length, quiet and peace was restored, and Gerald Clifton could think they were striving to imitate many of their superiors among the white race.

Sometimes, gentle reader, we have thought that it would be a glorious thing for the whites to establish rules and customs similar to those of the Indian tribes, where valor, honor, and courage, will alone give a brave preeminence over his fellows.

The repairs we have mentioned, and the refurnishing and refitting of the old homestead, was not accomplished for many months; but at length, all was complete. We must not dismiss this subject without relating one incident illustrative of the devotedness of Antoine's love for his cousin. When the work was near its completion, he and Louise visited New Orleans, bringing with them many of the books, trinkets, etc., from Seviere Place, which had once

been Marie's in her happy childhood. These Antoine had placed in Marie's own apartments, which had been magnificently furnished. Antoine and Louise visited every part of the house, and carefully noted any little defect in the arrange ments which had escaped the — in such affairs — inexperienced eye of Gerald Clifton. At last, just before the period arrived for the anticipated return of Captain and Madame Luzerne, everything was completed, even to the perfect satisfaction of the fastidious Antoine. He wrote a long letter to his cousin, in which he begged her to accept what he had done as a wedding present, and to state to Captain Luzerne that he must view the matter in that light, and not take offence at the otherwise unwarrantable liberty he had taken. Antoine Lafourche would have given much to have remained in New Orleans until the return of Madame Luzerne, and to once more clasp his little idol to his affectionate heart; but, remembering his last meeting with Captain Luzerne, and his, at that time, ineffectual

efforts to gain an interview with his cousin, he thought he would, in all probability, be doomed to like disappointment again; therefore, just before the arrival of his cousin and her husband, Antoine and Louise returned to Seviere Place. Surely, will not Antoine Lafourche's noble heart be happier for this act of disinterested kindness, which was, however, fated not to bring the much desired happiness and pleasure to the recipients of it? We will again leave our friends at Seviere Place to the enjoyment of their peaceful, happy lives.

To many, the life Antoine and Louise led at Seviere Place would have been very monotonous; but the good-natured, indolent Antoine, and the ever calm, quiet Louise, did not find it at all irksome, and their days and weeks rolled peacefully by. We will not have occasion to refer again to the family of Seviere Place for some time, so we will, therefore, for the present, bid them adieu, and return again to the old house in New Orleans, and repeat some

remarks of the two old negro women, after the visit of Antoine and Louise.

"Why, ole woman, dem your massa an' missus? Why, you is from better family dan I give you de credit of. You see, it was dis way Massa Captain's wife, dat's my young missus; now she so young when she come, she no more dan chile, an' ob course, she hab no style 'bout her, an' how was dis nigga to tell 'bout de family? But dis ole nigga is satisfied dat young missus's family 'bout as good as ours, dat is massa Captain's;" and Lida looked at old Eda with more than ordinary respect. But Lida's newly-discovered respect for herself and family did not have its desired effect upon the irascible old Eda, who angrily replied to her remark: —

"Why, you is crazy, ole woman, to talk 'bout 'paring Massa Cappin's family wid dat of my little missus; why, you fool, nigga, don't you know my little missus come from 'way 'cross de water, whar dar is a king an' ebber so many great people, an' dat

her fadder an' uncle was most kings, too. An' de idea ob you, mis'ble nigga, talkin' 'bout your family bein' 'most as good as dat of my young missus;" and old Eda's look of indignation was positively ludicrous. We will leave the old woman, with the other characters of our story, and in the succeeding chapter seek news of our friends upon the briny main.

CHAPTER XXI.

Home, home, there is no home for me,
No welcome smile of eyes to greet;
No words of love to cheer my path,
And thrill my heart with wilder beat.

WE will not seek to trace all the details incident to a sea-voyage, but will meet our voyagers on their homeward-bound trip, just as they are entering the mouth of the great Mississippi. It was near sunset in the evening, and Madame Luzerne sat upon the deck of the vessel, watching the setting sun; and after that had passed from her sight, she still gazed upon the bright clouds, which, bright and rosy as they were, their beauty was marred by dark masses, which, as the evening advanced, entirely obscured the rosy hues.

"Emblematical of my life," sighed Madame Luzerne; "it was thus my bright hopes and anticipations have been overshadowed by the dark clouds of disappointment. Oh, if the past could be blotted out, how I would rejoice in the prospect of once more seeing New Orleans and my home, gloomy as it

is!" — and Madame Luzerne sat lost in a bitter retrospection of the past, until the chill evening air called her back to the present, and warned her to seek the cabin. Upon entering which, Madame Luzerne found supper awaiting her, and seating herself at the table, where Captain Luzerne had been for some time awaiting her, the meal was dispatched in almost unbroken silence. Nearly one year of this wretched life had passed away, and still it was scarcely less miserable than the commencement, to Madame Luzerne. For while she loved Jean Luzerne, his temper, faults, and often cruelty, she could endure; but now, when respect and love were gone, at times it required all her fortitude and forbearance to endure the treatment to which Captain Luzerne often subjected her. Notwithstanding the Captain's promises of amendment, his fiery temper frequently got beyond his control; and then it was that his young wife's forbearance and Christian meekness was called into requisition.

Captain Luzerne, often tired of the quiet, monotonous life they led, and — do not be shocked, reader — longed for the society of Julie De Bourghe. So, you see, that the prophecy of Ned Murray would in all human probability be fulfilled upon their arrival at New Orleans. How fallacious the hope of reformation in one who has spent nearly a quarter of a century in reckless folly and dissipation! At times, so anxious was Captain Luzerne for some excitement to relieve their quiet life of its irksomeness and monotony, that he would have hailed the appearance of a storm with pleasure. Therefore, the prospect of returning to New Orleans, from whence he had been absent so long, was hailed with delight by Captain Luzerne.

After supper, when Madame Luzerne arose from the table, the Captain asked her if she would not like to promenade the deck for a short time, as the moon was shining brightly. Henri Adrian had usually been

her companion in these evening promenades, but latterly, Captain Luzerne had become jealous of the attentions of the handsome purser to his young wife, therefore had Madame Luzerne denied herself the pleasure of his most agreeable society. The noble Adrian, whose heart was the very embodiment of purity and honor, and perfectly incapable of conceiving or cherishing a thought toward his Captain's young wife which chivalrous honor would not admit of, could not for some time divine the cause of Madame Luzerne's coldness toward him. But at last, his doubts and perplexities were put to flight by engineer Murray whose evident pleasure in solving what had been a problem to Adrian relieved the recipient of his information of what might, under some circumstances, been considered an obligation. Murray's low, animal cunning and vulgarity gave him great advantage over one like Henri Adrian, who, with his purity and honor, could not imagine or suspicion another of a feeling so low as the one his

Captain was harboring toward his wife and himself. But as we before stated, Murray's low nature enabled him very readily to understand the state of affairs; and, therefore, the first opportunity, he commenced to banter Adrian about his conquest and the Captain's jealousy.

"You are surely wrong, Murray, in your surmises," said Henri, in reply to his rude jests; "Captain Luzerne, with all his faults, cannot cherish so unjust and dishonorable a thought of either his wife or myself."

"Adrian, you certainly are the most verdant youth I have ever met with," replied Murray, with one of his loud, discordant laughs. "Why, I don't believe there is one on board the ship, who has not observed the state of affairs and remarked upon it, and you still affect ignorance."

"I am under many, many obligations to you for your information," answered Henri; "still, I cannot but think, were the truth of your statement so palpable to others, I myself would have before this become aware

of the fact;" and soon as possible, Henri relieved himself of the company of his disagreeable companion, which, under circumstances similar to the present, was unendurable.

After getting rid of Murray, Henri seated himself upon the deck, in the bright moonlight, but in a secluded place, secure from the scrutiny and intrusion of any chance promenaders of the deck of the vessel. His solitude was soon broken by voices, and there, in his concealment, poor Henri heard enough of a conversation between Captain and Madame Luzerne, to confirm the truth of the engineer's statement. Long after they had retired to the cabin, Henri sat, almost stupefied by the shock the disclosure had given him. The lights from the distant city and the dawning day did not arouse him, and neither did he realize that he had sat all night upon the deck of the vessel, until the noise and confusion incident to preparations for anchoring the vessel. Then Henri aroused himself, and calmly

awaited the hurry and bustle to be over, that he might seek the quiet of the cabin, there to commence the struggle which was evident he must make to crush the love from his heart, the existence of which he had only become aware of for the first time the night before. Yes, incredible as it may appear, Henri had never even dreamed for one moment, that he regarded Madame Luzerne with other than warm interest and friendship might admit of, until he listened to the vulgar banterings of Murray, and the conversation of the Captain and his wife. Now the veil, transparent as it had been to others, but which had until now proved effectual in deceiving both himself and Madame Luzerne, was torn aside, and his pure heart was deeply wounded by the disclosure which revealed the deep, passionate love with which he regarded his Captain's wife.

At last, all left the ship but those who remained always on board of it. It was with pain, amounting almost to agony, that Henri watched the Captain and Madame

Luzerne leaving the vessel for their home on shore. He felt that the time was far distant when they would meet again, for he had heard Madame Luzerne remark that she would remain at home, possibly for some time; therefore, the time or possibility of their meeting again was indefinite. Poor Henri! yours is not the only heart which has felt the stings of disappointed affection. The heart of her whom you part with so reluctantly is only too much yours for her future happiness. Yet this knowledge has been rudely forced upon her, too, even as it was upon you. For, unconsciously had Marie given her love to Henri Adrian; unconsciously had she slightly swerved in her allegiance to her husband. Yet, she did not, could not, give him the love, the blind idolatry, which might once have been Luzerne's; and, after all, it is very possible her regard was only warm friendship, for she certainly loved Captain Luzerne once, and we have no faith in the existence of a second love. Yet we believe women often

love a second husband devotedly, but it is where they felt only a calm respect and affection for the first husband. And very frequently, women live and finally die, without loving at all; but that is because no one ever understood her sufficiently well to call forth her love. But once arouse in woman's heart a deep, pure, passionate love, for the first and only time in life; let the deep fountains you have called forth sparkle for a time in the sunlight of love; then, by coldness, deceit, or treachery, quench that love, and it is gone forever. A person might lecture me upon the fallacy of this opinion until Gabriel sounded his trumpet, and I would still be unconverted and unconvicted. Yet, as there are exceptions to every rule, why not to this? Therefore, I will mention one instance which I think does admit of an exception: — Where a woman has, from childhood up, breathed a perfect atmosphere of hypocrisy and falsehood in artificial society; and, when she arrives at the age of womanhood, with the purity and

truth of her heart so sullied, so contaminated by contact with the world, — in an instance similar to this, we have perfect faith in such a woman's capability of loving once, twice, yes, half-a-dozen times, in the fashionable acceptation of the term love. It was, possibly, most wisely ordained that our young friend should be tried by the fire, and come out refined and purified; and the tempest of trouble and agony through which his heart was passing, would have the effect of uprooting any chance weeds which might have taken root there. The very suffering which the noble young man was now enduring, would discipline his mind and heart for an ordeal still more trying. But we will leave Henri for the present, and follow our friends, the Captain and his wife, and see how they like the changes in their establishment during their absence.

CHAPTER XXII.

Adieu, my babe! if life were long,
This would be even a heavier song,
But years, like phantoms, quickly pass;
Then look *to us* from memory's glass,
Soon on death's couch I shall recline;
Soon shall my head be laid with thine,
And sundered spirits meet above,
To live forevermore in love.

E will now follow Captain and Madame Luzerne to their home, and see how the improvements in the old mansion during their absence will affect them.

The yard and exterior first made them almost doubt if their carriage had really brought them to their own home. But soon the appearance of the servants, and the joyful reception they received from them, dispelled their doubts; and Madame Luzerne and the Captain entered the house only to have their surprise and astonishment renewed by the discovery of the elegantly furnished rooms that there met their eyes.

"Who!" angrily exclaims Captain Luzerne, "has been making themselves so officious

during my absence with my house?" and a dark frown settled upon his brow. Eda gave him Antoine's letter, but it had no other effect than to increase his ill-nature. At last, Eda, who had remained present, getting out of all patience at the Captain's very unreasonable ill-humor, exclaimed, —

"Why, you see, Massa Cappen, my young missus's family don't like fur to see her lib in de ole house in de fix it was in; an so dey has jus clared it up so it's fit to lib in, cause dey know you is not rich 'nuff yoself to do it."

Old Eda's speech only inflamed Captain Luzerne's anger still, and starting up, he exclaimed, —

"Madame, your family must have a strange idea of Jean Luzerne, if they think he will endure this continued insult and impertinence. They not only interfere with my domestic affairs, but even this pampered old negro is here to insult me, too;" and Captain Luzerne strode toward Eda, and it is doubtful if the old woman would have

escaped from the room without feeling the weight of his strong arm, had not her mistress rushed between them, and she herself received the blow intended for the old nurse. Captain Luzerne, so perfectly under the influence of his excited temper as to be scarcely sensible of what he was doing, left the house without waiting to become cognizant of the wretched effects of his insane passion.

Eda raised her mistress from the floor where she had been felled by the blow, and placed her upon a sofa. But when Eda saw that Madame Luzerne still remained insensible, she uttered a piercing scream that quickly brought Taylor and Lida to her aid. They carried Madame Luzerne to her own apartments, and undressed and placed her in bed. It was some time before their united efforts could restore her to consciousness, and then it was only to become aware of still more fearful agonies. A physician was sent for, but for three days that frail life hung upon a spider's

web. It was not until the next day that Captain Luzerne returned to his home, and then the terrible condition in which he found his wife really alarmed him.

The third day, just when the physicians had despaired of being able to save the life of Madame Luzerne, she gave premature birth to an infant, which only survived its birth a few hours, and then its pure spirit returned to the God who gave it, but not before the holy water of baptism had been poured upon its sweet brow by the hand of good old Father S——. Madame Luzerne had become conscious of everything that was transpiring, and there is no mother among my readers who cannot imagine her terrible agony in the death of her babe, far better than I can describe it. Even before its birth her every joy and hope in life had been centred in it; but when with its first feeble cry, the strong current of a mother's love surged so blissfully through her young heart, every tendril of her being seemed wound around that tiny life. And, oh!

to give up that little one! it was agony inexpressible. Yet it must be the angel of Death stood ready to bear the pure, little blossom back to the bosom of Him who has said,—"Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

And when, weeks after, Madame Luzerne was able once more to walk out, all that was left of her sweet dream of motherhood was the tiny casket, which had been placed beside that of his aged grandsire's. O mothers! you can realize, as you press your dear little ones to your hearts, the agony, the wild despair, with which that poor, bereaved young mother clasped that little coffin to her aching heart, when she at last was able to visit the vault.

I have sometimes thought that the most blissful period of a woman's life is the moment when she receives into her arms her first-born babe. O mothers! you who have experienced this enchanting feeling coursing through the heart, like a mighty

flood, surely you can bear testimony to the correctness of my statement. And if this moment is the happiest of a woman's life, surely the most terrible agony she is called upon to bear is that which she endures when her babe is torn from her by the ruthless hand of death.

Captain Luzerne felt all the remorse imaginable for the terrible deed which he had committed while under the influence of his angry passion; but his repentance was of short duration, for Madame Luzerne was scarcely convalescent before her husband left New Orleans, to be absent several weeks, on a voyage to New York City, taking with him Julie De Bourghe, between whom and himself a reconciliation had been effected through the kindness of our friend Murray.

It was well that Madame Luzerne did not love Jean Luzerne sufficiently well to cause her the terrible pangs of jealousy. Had this weight been added to her cross, it would have indeed been unendurable. As the case stood, she was spared the fierce

tortures such an ordeal would have occasioned her. Surely, of all the passions which exist in the human heart, there are none so terrible, so withering, blasting in its effects, as jealousy. And yet many will tell us, where devoted love exists, so must, of necessity, jealousy. If such be the fact, give us, O propitious Fate, a life without love. Wretched, worthless, as such an existence would be, it is far preferable to all the golden sunshine and affection, with the green-eyed monster ever standing in the background, like a frightful skeleton in a doctor's office.

CHAPTER XXIII.

'Tis over; and the rite,
With all its pomp and harmony, is now
Floating before her. She arose at home,
To be the show, the idol, of the day;
Her vesture gorgeous; and her starry head—
No rocket, bursting into midnight sky,
So gorgeous. When, tomorrow, she awakes,
She will awake as tho' she still were there—
Still in her father's house; and lo! a cell!
Narrow and dark; naught thro' the gloom discerned,
Naught save the crucifix, the rosary,
And the gray habit lying by to shroud
Her beauty and her grace.

MADAME Luzerne's recovery was slow, and many were the weary hours she passed in her room, with no one but the devoted old Eda for company. Josie De La Tour and Father S—— had frequently visited Madame Luzerne during her convalescence; but the first time she went out after her illness, was when she went to witness her friend's reception into the Order of St. F., and of her taking those irrevocable vows which bound her to a life of self-denial and charity.

After the solemn ceremony was over, and Madame Luzerne had kissed Josie's fair

cheek, she started upon her return home. Upon arriving there, she retired to her room, and very naturally, her mind reverted to the scene she had just witnessed. As Madame Luzerne reclined upon the sofa, and thought of the ceremony, she seemed almost to hear the pealing organ, the solemn chant, and to see before her the sweet face of Josie De La Tour, as she, with firm, unfaltering accents, pronounced the vows which would ever stand an insurmountable barrier between her and the world she had once loved so well, and which her beauty and accomplishments so fitted her to adorn. And, as the dreamy reverie gained still deeper ascendancy over her mind, she became oblivious to her surroundings, and saw herself clothed in spotless white, and standing before the altar, as she had seen Josie. And then, while standing there, her purpose seemed to falter; she had looked into the cold, cheerless, loveless future, and would have turned back, but Josie De La Tour was at her side, reproaching, reproving her for

fickleness, and telling her of the world — how false, how hollow, and fleeting its pleasures were; and then renewed courage filled her heart, and the ceremony went on. And, again, she saw herself fulfilling the duties of the Order. And Josie was there, too, as Mother Superior, noted for her strict discharge of religious duties, and for her stern, unrelenting exactions from others of like observance. And was this Josie De La Tour? This proud, haughty, cold woman! Was this animated iceberg the once joyous girl, who flitted through the old school-building like a gleam of sunshine, warbling merry songs, sweet as those of the mocking-bird in the orange-groves of dear old Louisiana? Yes; this was Josie De La Tour, or rather, the transformation which contact with the enchanting world had made her.

"What is it?" exclaimed Madame Luzerne, starting up; "have I been asleep and dreaming? No! surely I saw it all. Dear Josie, will this vision be realized? Can she so

crush every human emotion, and become what I just saw her in my vision? Oh, impossible! friend of my happy childhood! you must not change at least; you, of all others, must leave me one dream, and must not assist the world in forcing upon me the bitter, terrible realities of life. The sweet dreams of my youth, one by one, have been crushed from my heart; friends, whom I once idolized, have been taken from me. What have I left to live for? Nothing is left me but the memory of the happy past, standing like a mocking phantom, in vivid contrast to my wretched, cheerless future! Oh, my girlhood's friend! hast thou not chosen the better part? You have abjured the world, and with it, all memories of the past; and in the future, in fulfilling your religious obligations, in the blissful privilege of living for others, you will be perfectly oblivious to any past sorrow; and the calm, peaceful, holy life you will lead, is surely not so terrible, after all, as the one in prospective which stretches out before me

in the dim vista of the future, like a cheerless, barren waste, with no green shrub or flower, no ray of bright sunshine, to cheer or relieve it of its wretched monotony.

But I, what have I to live for? What was I put into the world for? To assist in filling it up, to occupy space upon the earth's surface as a rank weed or a useless stone?

This cannot be true; I must have a work to accomplish, and I have not sought it as earnestly, prayerfully, as I should.

"Show me my work, O God! Assist me, O Holy Mary, to fulfil my vocation!" And a fervent amen, that was uttered in response to the prayer that was unconsciously repeated aloud, caused Madame Luzerne to start to her feet and look toward the door, where stood Father S——, whom Eda had shown to her room, as she had frequently done during Madame Luzerne's convalescence.

"Your prayer and wish, my child, are most commendable, and thus early do I

bring an answer to it. I have come to show you a field of labor worthy your talents, energies, and impulses.

"You have, no doubt, heard that the blighting, blasting breath of civil war is sweeping over our land. This fact has opened a wide field of labor for us, and we must not shrink from its performance; or, rather, you must not; for age, my child, precludes the possibility of my taking any active part in this work. But one whose spotless character has cast a perfect halo of glory upon our Order, will go with our troops to Virginia, where, no doubt, you, too, will go; for Captain Luzerne will prove no laggard in the discharge of his duty to his country.

"To this holy man will I intrust your future guidance in the sacred discharge of both your religious duties, and those equally binding upon you to your fellow-beings.

"Of course, your friends, your family, in time yourself, perhaps, will adopt and advocate the doctrine, 'Right or wrong, with

and for my country.' I can but think that this wretched business could have been arranged without the fearful ruin and bloodshed which is now inevitable. But it is useless speaking now of 'what might have been;' the subject before us, is, as I said before, what is inevitable.

"I foresee that fanatics will seek to carry everything to extremes; and, believe me, in the abodes of the damned, no fiend there can suggest more desperate counsels than those adopted, under the guidance of our own violent and irresisted passions. We are plunged into all the horrors of civil war by the fierce passions and mad ambitions of wicked, unprincipled men; our duty and work is plain before us; we will perform it untrammelled by the opinions and prejudices of others. And Father S—— paused, and seemed for a time to be peering into the dim vista of futurity, before he marked out the '*role*' for the performance of deeds and acts which should render the name of his young *protege* immortal."

"Father, you do indeed surprise me!" exclaimed Madame Luzerne. "I have been so long confined to my room; I have been, with the exception of yourself and the few friends who have called upon me, almost oblivious to all the world, and am in perfect ignorance of everything that has been transpiring, therefore your information fills me with astonishment."

"I do not marvel, my child, that the news should astonish you," replied Father S——; "for it burst like a lightning flash upon many persons whose paths lay amid the bustle and turmoil of life, and who are ever quick to inform themselves of everything calculated to affect the political or commercial interests of the country. But this conversation is delaying my disclosing to you the real object of my visit. As I before stated, a priest will go from here, whose course in life I directed until he had developed such wisdom, and his principles were such, that I could intrust the control of his life into his own hands without a single doubt or

misgiving, and the bud that gave such brilliant promise had expanded into a glorious flower. Yes, Father Francis — as he is named — from his purity and nobility of character, is well worthy his priestly robes; and none, believe me, ever adorned that holy character more than he, and without a single foreboding do I commit you to his guidance. And now, my child, kneel before this crucifix, the sacred symbol of our faith, and pledge me that you will devote your energies, your influence, and even your life, if necessary, to the best interests of your country, and to the cause of humanity. And do you promise me, Marie Luzerne, by this sacred emblem, that never will you permit, for one moment, the prejudices of education, fanaticism, or party spirit, to influence you so far as to make you deaf to the calls of mercy? Remember, if we, in this coming contest, forget the claims of charity; forget that Catholics will oppose Catholics; if we, I say, are deaf to the claims of charity, — it will shake the very

corner-stone of our Church here in America. Because, where heretofore all have been united and of one mind, there will spring up dissensions innumerable; it will cause Catholic to be arrayed against Catholic. But all this evil can be forestalled by every true Catholic permitting the claims of mercy to remain paramount in his or her heart to every other consideration. Even when you meet one arrayed in the uniform of the enemy — but whose situation appeals to your charity — then allow the sacred cross, emblematical of the faith of both, to remind you of your duty to a fellow-being, to God, and your church. To carry out these views, our Order sends Father Francis to Virginia. Will you go, too, and prove yourself an able and most efficient adjutant?"

It needed not the fervent kiss pressed upon the cross; it needed not her vehement words of response to his appeal, to convince Father S—— that his appealing to Madame Luzerne had not been in vain.

One look into her face; that was suffi-

cient. O Faith, Patriotism! you could have found no more worthy priestess to officiate at your altar than that young girl, with fidelity, truth, and inspiration in every feature and expression of her face. Poor, unhappy America! could the pure, noble, unselfish, patriotic spirit have been infused into the hearts of thy sons, which burned like incense at the altar in the heart of Marie Luzerne, it would have been better for thee!

CHAPTER XXIV.

The night scowled gloomier down; I could not throw
From off my heart the weary weight of woe,
But loathed the world, and coveted to die;
Beholding only in the earth and air
Omens of desolation and despair.

IT seemed as if, day and night, the pall of death hung over the old Crescent City, so unbroken was the stillness which reigned there. Business was hushed, and the commercial world was at a stand-still — if we may be permitted so homely an expression — and it appeared to await some important crisis before resuming its bustle and briskness. The ships of every nation lay idly at anchor; some with flags floating lazily in the gentle breeze, others with their crews lying in the shade of awnings, while others slept. About the street-corners, and in stores, saloons, and hotels, men might be seen, with ill-suppressed excitement, discussing some important topic of conversation. Intense excitement and anxiety mark the countenances of all. Even little children, who were accustomed

to congregate on pleasant afternoons in the squares, if they met at all now, their joy seemed constrained. They seemed to realize that the minds of parents and friends were filled with anxious forebodings; and, for the present, at least, their usual sports, and shouts of careless, childish glee, would be out of place and ill-timed.

But this portentous gloom and stillness could not long remain unbroken. Soon, only too soon, was the city to be aroused from its deathlike quiet, and by what? The thunderings of Sumter's guns, the accursed bugle-blast of civil war, which swept over our land like a lightning flash, arousing the demon of resistance in each Southern heart.

Be South Carolina's example good or bad, it is not for us to decide. Suffice that her secession was quickly followed by that of other of the Southern States; and, as if the demon of destruction had indeed been unchained, all the horrors of civil war was upon us.

It is not to be supposed that Louisiana,

with her excitable French element, with whom war is ever a favorite pastime, would delay very long in following the example of her seceding sisters. She did not; and the bonds that bound her to the old union were snapped in twain, as carelessly and indifferently as if they had been brittle threads, and the fatal step was taken, which was to change the sunny groves of the South into battle-fields and her sons into soldiers.

It is not our intention, O reader, to enter into a history of the late war. There is not a little child in all the broad land, extending from New England's rock-bound coast to the sunny banks of the Rio Grande, with whom the subject is not a perfectly familiar one. And there is nothing in the history of the past but sad, bitter memories, calculated to tear afresh wounds but partially healed. Therefore, in the course of our story, we shall only touch upon the subject where necessity in the narration of facts compel us, and then only briefly as

possible. For, while we can with perfect sincerity give our commiseration to the widow, daughter, wife, or sister, mourning the loss of one dear to them, yet we, as a daughter of that land of ruined villages, devasted homes and cities, of course, we can but take a southern view of this painful subject. For the ruined, desolated South was and is still dear to my heart as the life-current that gives me being; and I cannot write upon this subject without advocating the principles for which my kindred fought and died. Could I do otherwise, I would be unworthy of the sunny clime which gave me birth. Still, I hope I shall ever have the generosity not to intrude my opinions and views upon others. The North have as good right to their opinions, for which they have sacrificed so much; therefore, in our story, we shall not seek to resurrect a buried past.

Antoine Lafourche had, almost at the firing of the first gun at Sumter, commenced making preparations to enlist in the

cause of the South. Gerald Clifton, although a Northern man by birth, had also warmly espoused the Southern cause, and, with Henri Adrian, was going with Antoine into the army, now rapidly collecting from every quarter.

For some time, Captain Luzerne had seemed in doubt which side to take — his usual selfishness advocating the cause of the one most likely to succeed — but, finally, he concluded to raise a regiment from among the sailors, and take them on to the Capitol, and volunteer his and their services to the Confederate States. This plan he finally put into execution. Previous to leaving New Orleans, however, Captain Luzerne disposed of what property he possessed, and his interest in his ship. It was, therefore but a brief time from his return home, after his last voyage, to the period when we find him in the beautiful city of Richmond, and colonel of a regiment in the service of the Confederacy. Madame Luzerne accompanied Captain Luzerne, taking with her

their servants. It was very painful to her, giving up the home which Antoine had fitted up with such affectionate thought for her comfort and pleasure.

But Madame Luzerne did not have a very long time given her to think of, or to grieve over, the thought of leaving her home, for early in the summer of 1861, we find her in Richmond, where her youth, beauty, and accomplishments rendered her the centre of attraction.

Few that met the wife of Colonel Luzerne — as we must now, in all courtesy, call him — could realize that she was indeed Madame; so youthful did she appear, with her slight, graceful form, and childish expression of countenance, which contrasted so agreeably with the dark, and, at times, scowling brow of her liege lord.

Colonel Luzerne was highly flattered by the enthusiastic reception his wife met with everywhere; still, his pleasure was not altogether without alloy when he reflected upon the subject. He remembered how very lim-

ited was her knowledge of the world, and that very possibly her heart might pass into the possession of one of the many noble-looking officers who constantly sought her society, and who prized her slightest word or smile as one would a jewel of inestimable value.

Yes, that heart and intellect was devoted unreservedly to her country; and since the hour Madame Luzerne had knelt and kissed the crucifix, she had felt that she saw her earthly mission, now that she had entered upon it. But oh, she would sadly miss good old Father S——, to whom she had said farewell with such an aching heart, for she feared she would never again meet him or hear his voice in solemn counsels, which had been so prized by her. In the future, surrounded by temptations on every hand, she must lean upon her own strength; she must meet the cares, snares, and dangers of life alone; for the only one from whom she felt she had the right to expect advice, was incapable of advising or di-

recting such a heart and intellect as hers. To be sure, Father Francis had come with the troops, but she had not as yet become sufficiently well acquainted with him to seek assistance from a stranger in any of her difficulties, and thus her battle of life was fairly commenced.

Oh, how can the world and society expect so much at the hands of a *woman*, surrounded by temptations and snares that even *men* could not pass through unscathed? Unjust as it is, such is the case. Be watchful, therefore, O Marie! thou art out now fairly upon the stage of life; the great world watches thy every movement with jealous eye.

Oh, women of my native land, who are thus cast out upon the great ocean of life, and *alone* must buffet with the waves and tempest continually surging over it, you deserve the *pity* and support of the world, instead of its pitiless, uncharitable criticisms!

CHAPTER XXV.

"Then as through life, thy footsteps rove,
'Neath clear or cloudy skies,
As richest blessings from above
Thy faithful friends e'er prize;
With joy they'll make thy journey bright,
With flowers thy pathway strew,
And fill each moment's rapid flight
With pleasure ever new;
For, as rich gems from o'er the sea,
Or jewels 'yond compare,
To human hearts must ever be
Some friends who prove sincere."

MADAME Luzerne's sojourn in the city of Richmond was very brief, owing to Colonel Luzerne's regiment being ordered to Northern Virginia. It is not to be supposed that our heroine can pass through all the temptations and demoralizing influences which ever follow in the footsteps of war, and still retain her childlike simplicity and ignorance of the world. No; this could not be; the serpent's trail was found in Paradise, and upon the tablets of the purest minds he leaves his impress. We would not infer by this remark that Madame Luzerne's purity of

heart suffered by the contaminating influences by which she was constantly surrounded, and that she became a participant in all the dissipations of the Capitol. But this we do believe, that even had Madame Luzerne, pure, holy, childlike, as she was — almost sinless as mortal can be — even this pure being could not exist long, exposed to all the snares and temptations of society, without either becoming a misanthrope, or learning to look upon sin with more favor, and becoming constantly less shocked by its proximity.

Think for one moment, reader, of a time when, in early youth, you too resembled our heroine; of the first time *sin*, stripped of its allurements, and all unmasked, crossed your pathway. Oh, with what loathing and horror you turned away, until your vision was relieved of the hateful presence! The second time, you were less shocked, because you were becoming familiar with the disgusting visitant; until, finally, you either sink to a level with the world, or you become

a misanthrope, disgusted, and loathing your fellow-beings.

Oh, I cannot understand why a heart yearning for purity and truth, can be sullied by contamination, and finally sink into infamy. What countless numbers, steeped in all the degradation of sin and guilt, but whose hearts daily fervently reecho the wish of Festus, —

> "Would I were a pure child again,
> As 'ere the clear could trouble me; when life
> Was sweet and calm as a sister's kiss;
> And not the wild and whirlwind touch of passion
> Which, though it hardly touch upon the lip,
> With breathless swiftness sucks the soul out of sight,
> So we lose it and all thought of it."

"But what does all this prelude have to do with Marie Luzerne's life?" exclaims some impatient reader. Much, very much, will it have to do with her life in the future. But sometimes the very abruptness of the shock with which sin heralds its approach preserves its intended victim from the poison of its fatal fangs. It so happened in an incident connected with the life

of our heroine in Richmond. Madame Luzerne had been introduced to a Major B——, from a Southern city, who bore the reputation of being perfectly irresistible with the fair sex. By some chance, Colonel G——, from the same place as Major B——, and to whom the Major was indebted for the introduction, omitted to mention to his friend that Marie Luzerne was a wife. Colonel G—— addressed her as Mademoiselle, and when she corrected him in the presence of his friend, gayly replied, —

"Mademoiselle, it is useless trying to deceive Major B——, by telling him you are married; that face of yours contradicts the assertion;" and before Madame Luzerne could reply, he led Major B—— to a distant part of the parlors of the S—— Hotel, where they were all stopping at that time. A few minutes after, Colonel G—— returned to Madame Luzerne, and taking a seat by her side, begged as a favor that she would carry on the deception for a few days, as he had an object in view in asking it.

"Your request is a singular one," replied Madame Luzerne; "but if you can show me a good reason for granting it, I promise I will do so."

"I cannot, just now," continued Colonel G——, "state my object in making the request; but, believe me, I honor you too highly to ask anything at your hands that would, in any manner, compromise your dignity as a lady. The impression I created purposely tonight, that you were an unmarried lady, can be very easily continued, as Colonel Luzerne is absent, and you, being almost a perfect stranger, it is not probable that any one will undeceive him for a day or two, when my object will be accomplished."

Thus entreated, Madame Luzerne made the required promise, and in a few minutes, Major B—— returned to her side, and did not leave her again until late in the evening. Madame Luzerne was much pleased with his society, and for several days, encouraged by her innocent, childlike pref-

erence for his company to that of others by whom she was surrounded, Major B—— was almost continually in her society. At length, one morning, Colonel G—— entered the parlor, where, finding Madame Luzerne alone, he requested her to make him still another promise.

"What is it now, unreasonable man that you are?" laughingly asked Madame Luzerne. "I have found it no easy task, believe me, to fulfil my present obligation."

"This will not be so difficult a task as the former," replied Colonel G——; "but, first, allow me to explain what it is I would ask of you. Major B—— will leave the city in a few hours, as his regiment has been ordered away, and, of course, he will come here to bid you farewell. I wish you to be in the adjoining parlor, which is almost unfrequented by the guests stopping at the house; order the servant to show him into that parlor, and you must be sitting near the door, at the far end of the parlor from here. Please, follow my directions;

and now I must leave you, as I expect the Major to call every moment;" and Colonel G—— hurriedly left the parlor. Madame Luzerne, after giving directions to the servant who attended to the parlors to show Major B——, if he should call, into the upper parlor, retired there herself, where she was very soon joined by the Major.

"The fates are most propitious, Mademoiselle," he exclaimed, seating himself beside her. "I feared you would not be alone, and I have much to say to you, as I must leave Richmond in a few hours. I love you, Mademoiselle, as I never before loved woman, but I cannot marry you, for I am a married man. You love me, I am confident; why should we part? You can go with me; no one will know you are not my wife but Colonel G——, and he will not betray our secret. I know the knowledge comes suddenly upon you, but that makes no difference. You consent, of course, to go; do you not, darling?" and the con-

ceited coxcomb took the hand of Madame Luzerne and pressed it to his lips.

Madame Luzerne, from the moment he commenced speaking, had been so shocked by his base proposition, that she could not for some moments fully realize the meaning of his dishonorable proposal; but, when he dared to pollute her hand with his impure kiss, it called all the pure, honorable Lafourche blood to her face, and awoke all their courage and principle in her heart. Springing to her feet, she exclaimed: —

"How dare you, an officer, wearing the same uniform as my husband and my cousin, pollute my ears with such words as you have dared to speak to me today? Begone from my presence, and never again dare to approach any of my sex, until you can do so in all honor and truth. Remember, all women are not weak enough to be caught by a dashing exterior. Go, and redeem the past in the exercise of high and holy principles in the future, and thus seek to make the world better by your life."

The crest-fallen *irresistible* left Madame Luzerne's presence, and she did what many other women would have done — burst into tears. For the first time, she had listened to insulting words from the lips of man, and she felt as if the very fact of those words being spoken in her presence had cast a blemish upon her purity. Madame Luzerne was weeping unrestrainedly when the door near which she was sitting opened, and Colonel G—— entered, and taking a seat, appeared deeply pained to find her so unhappy.

"Noble lady," he exclaimed, "believe me, I would not have asked you to enact the part you have, and listen to this man's insult — which, pardon me, I purposely concealed myself in the adjoining room to overhear — if I had thought it would have given you so much pain. But it was for a good purpose I asked it all of you, and when I explain my motive, you will forgive me for the pain I have innocently caused you. Major B——, although a good man in some

respects, will no doubt prove an honor to the service in the first battle he is in; yet, notwithstanding all this, he is insufferably vain, and fancies every lady whom he meets is ready to fall down in humble adoration at his feet; and, until this moment, women have, by their folly, strengthened this belief on his part. I thought him worth curing of his vanity, and when he requested an introduction to you, I felt I had found an efficient coadjutor in my philanthropic work, and therefore enlisted you in the cause. You have nobly vindicated the honor of your sex, and taken the conceit out of one whose worst fault is the one you have so materially assisted in ridding him of. Now, Madame, am I pardoned? is my defence satisfactory?" And Colonel G—— stood, in mock humility, before Madame Luzerne, until she arose and gave him her hand in token of his restoration to her favor.

Colonel G—— left the city that evening, the Major accompanying him. Some time in the year 1862 it was Madame Luzerne's

fortune to meet Colonel G—— again, when he informed her that Major B—— had never forgotten the severe lesson she had taught him, and that it had effected a perfect cure of his vanity; and, furthermore, that Major B—— was rapidly rising in the esteem and confidence of the army and government.

But poor Major B—— never lived to return to the wife from whom his heart had strayed so often. He fell upon one of the many battle-fields in Old Virginia; and, strange as it may appear, the painful duty of informing Mrs. B—— of the Major's death, by some chance, Madame Luzerne was called to perform. Ah, me! strange things sometimes transpire in this world. Here was this man, who had polluted the ears of a pure woman with words of sin and insult, indebted to her for the last sad office a dying soldier asks of his comrade — that of informing his friends of his death. Such is life.

CHAPTER XXVI.

"I would not that my lips should speak
A word to give thee pain,
Or that should cause thee e'er to break
One link in friendship's chain;
For friendship is a sacred tie
That human hearts doth bind,
And blessed is he, though low or high,
Who sincere friends doth find.
But this one warning, pray you heed,
Which now I give to thee —
That all are not true friends indeed
Who so profess to be."

AS we stated in the commencement of our last chapter, Madame Luzerne did not long remain in Richmond, but went with Colonel Luzerne to Northern Virginia, or rather, Northwestern Virginia, first; from whence they were ordered, in a very short time, to Manassas. It would take a volume many times larger than we design ours to be, to narrate even the principal part of the adventures and incidents which befell our heroine during this year, but we have neither time nor space but for the relation of a very small part of them.

Madame Luzerne was in the rear at the

terrible battle-field of Manassas, and heard the roaring of cannon and the clash of arms; and, after the battle was over, the terrible sight that everywhere met her view would have inexpressibly shocked one of a less sensitive organization. But Madame Luzerne did not long permit her feelings to be a drawback to her making herself an able assistant to the surgeons in their work of mercy; and with untiring energy did she labor with them, until the suffering and wants of the last wounded soldier were attended to.

Madame Luzerne's noble conduct had called forth the admiration of the army; and when, some time after the battle, she went to witness a grand review, they received her with a perfect storm of applause, so that the timid little woman was fairly frightened, and turned to an officer who accompanied her, for an explanation.

"Oh, is that all!" she exclaimed, with her old impulsiveness. "I only fulfilled my vow; I only did my duty."

"But few of us ever do our duty so perfectly and so nobly as you have in the last few days, my child;" and Madame Luzerne recognized in the speaker Father Francis, who had come up with her party in time to hear her remark.

"You, too, Father, appear to have joined in this conspiracy my friends have formed to make me vain; and indeed, I do begin to think myself quite a heroine. But, Father, if you enter into this conspiracy, I shall report you to Father S—— when I return home," gaily replied Madame Luzerne, forgetting and unheeding the scowling brow of her husband, who had not been in the best possible humor for some time, on account of the enthusiasm his wife was exciting, and would have sent her to Richmond, only it would have been worse there, for he could not accompany her; and the thought of exposing her to the fascinations of the officers there, without his jealous, watchful eye being upon her, made the Colonel decide for her to remain with him.

Some time after the battle, as Madame Luzerne was passing through the camp of one of the regiments in the same brigade with Colonel Luzerne, she noticed a very small boy with a group of soldiers. The extreme youth of the boy, and his wearing the uniform of the regiment, attracted the attention of Madame Luzerne, and she ventured to address him.

"What is your name, little boy? and surely you are not a soldier?" she kindly asked, patting the cheek of the little fellow.

"They call me 'Little Dixie,' and I have got so used to the name, and like it so well, I have almost forgotten the one mamma gave me; and as to my being a soldier, I should think I was one, though the Captain would not let me go into the battle. The boys all know it was not from my being a coward, and that on that account he was afraid to trust me," stoutly affirmed the young hero, his eyes sparkling, and his cheeks glowing with conscious bravery. Madame Luzerne was much amused with the

embryo soldier, and turning to some of the men, asked them concerning the child. She learned he was from Kentucky, and had run away from home and followed the regiment for over fifty miles before he came up with them. The greater part of the journey he had performed on foot. The Captain had written to his parents, and promised to take good care of him.

"But ah, Madame," continued the soldier, "although it would be hard to part with him now, we all know it is no place for him here."

"Do you think it would be possible to induce him to stay with me? — I shall be near the army, and will care for him as if he were my own child;" and the more Madame Luzerne looked at the boy, the more anxious she became that he would place himself under her protection. He was but eight years of age, of scarcely medium height, but quite stout and healthy, with an abundance of dark auburn curls, and an almost infantile expression of countenance.

"I do not know about that; I am confident the Captain would most gladly give him to you, but I do not believe he would consent to leave the company," replied the soldier, in answer to Madame Luzerne's question. Then, perceiving Madame Luzerne's look of disappointment, he continued, "but we will ask him; perhaps you may exert some influence over him. Come here, Dixie; this lady wishes you to go and live with her; will you go? She has no little boy, and wishes some one to travel with her, to take care of her."

For a few minutes, the bright, laughing face of the child assumed a thoughtful expression, but in a very short time, he replied, —

"I should like to go with you, but I cannot leave the boys. I will come to see you every day, and if you ever need any one to protect you, just let me know;" and the young hero drew himself up with a dignity that was perfectly ludicrous, when his diminutive proportions were considered.

Madame Luzerne tried in vain to dissuade him from his purpose of remaining with the soldiers, but all in vain; and she was forced to be content with his promise of visiting her every day.

The next morning, while they were at breakfast, Madame Luzerne was quite surprised to hear a childish voice warbling "Dixie's Land," but in a few minutes Little Dixie appeared. The little soldier gravely saluted the officers present; but, in answer to Madame Luzerne's smiling welcome, he, for a time, forgot the dignity of the soldier, and gave free vent to the impulses of the child by throwing his arms around her, and imprinting a kiss upon her lips. Perhaps the little fellow thought of his mother far away in Kentucky, and tears for a moment dimmed his eyes; but, hastily brushing them away, he exclaimed, —

"There, that is the first lady I have kissed since I left home, though the ladies in Richmond coaxed me mighty hard to kiss them; but I did not. But she is

almost as sweet as our ladies," and the boy looked admiringly at Madame Luzerne.

"You had better beware, my little soldier, how you make love to our Colonel's wife. Are you not afraid of exciting his jealousy?" laughingly asked Major Wheat, of the regiment, who sat at the breakfast-table.

"What do you say? Is she married? Why, she would be no more than a child in my country. And is this Colonel here her husband?" asked the boy, with astonishment depicted upon his face. "Why, who would have believed it? Well, old fellow," continued he, walking up to Colonel Luzerne, "I would just like to be in your boots, if I were a man. But you must not get jealous; I will promise not to try to steal her heart, and will not kiss her but once a day;" and Dixie bade them good morning, with all the gravity of a grenadier. Colonel Luzerne and the officers were too much amused with the little fellow to give him up so soon, therefore, at their earnest

entreaty, Dixie remained a greater part of the day. But when the drums beat in the evening for battalion-drill and dress-parade, no inducement would longer retain Dixie, and Madame Luzerne saw him trudging along after his company when they went out to the drill. His uniform and gun, canteen, knapsack, etc., had all been given him in Richmond; and he prized them very highly.

He faithfully fulfilled his promise to Madame Luzerne, of visiting her every day, and scarcely a single day passed without their meeting with some amusing adventure.

One day, they had been roaming about the country, and being then with the troops on picket, they were of course quite near the Federal lines. Suddenly, they found themselves surrounded by a group of soldiers wearing the blue uniform. Madame Luzerne was much frightened, but not enough so as to deprive her of her presence of mind. She reflected a moment, that if they found out that she was the wife of a Confederate officer, it was not probable they would let

them return to the regiment. Therefore, she quickly formed a plan, which she determined to act upon. Giving the boy a look, she answered their question as to who they were.

"I live near here, now," she replied, assuming as much as possible the speech and manner of the country people; "but I ain't lived in the neighborhood long, and we have lost our way. We was going to Mr. Harris's; can you tell us where he lives?" And had Madame Luzerne lived all her life in the backwoods of Old Virginia, she could not have had more the manner of one of the natives than she now assumed. The Federals asked her a number of questions as to the number of troops on the hills; how many regiments, etc.; all of which questions Madame Luzerne, under shelter of her assumed disguise of character, gave vague answers to; finally, they permitted her to depart.

"Will I come across any more soldiers?" she asked, as they were starting down the road.

"No," replied the Federals, "not if you keep the right-hand road; but if you turn to the left, about a hundred yards from here, where the roads fork, you will soon find yourself among the rebel pickets."

Madame Luzerne hastened down the road, and we may be sure she took the left-hand road, and soon found herself surrounded by the "boys in gray."

Madame Luzerne scarcely drew her breath for fright, until she was again in the Confederate lines, for she had recognized in one of the Federals our old acquaintance, Ned Murray. How he came to be with them, Madame Luzerne never learned. She was considerably changed since their last meeting, and her face was completely concealed beneath an enormous "sun-bonnet;" and if Murray did recognize her at all, he did not betray it. Notwithstanding all this, Madame Luzerne did not feel perfectly safe until she was again within their own lines.

After that adventure, Madame Luzerne and Dixie were more guarded where they rambled,

and Dixie especially ever after had a perfect horror of going on picket.

"Why, you see, boys!" he exclaimed, after relating his adventure; "if they had only known I was a soldier, they might have shot me for a spy. I don't suppose they would have hurt Miss Mamie," — as he always persisted in calling Madame Luzerne, — "and then, she is only a girl; they surely do not make war upon children and women?"

For some days it was a favorite amusement of the soldiers to get around Dixie, and get him to relate his adventure. Madame Luzerne related what the Federals had asked her, and her replies to their questions, to the Commandant; and he very wisely, as it afterwards proved, took advantage of her information to prepare for an attack upon his lines. The precaution was not unnecessary, for a few hours after, a large force charged the hills. But the Confederates being forewarned and thus prepared, they were driven back with immense loss.

When Dixie was told that it was all through him and Madame Luzerne, that the fight had been brought about, he exclaimed, —

"Well, if I ever do tell you anything again, you may shoot me; for they certainly will, if they ever catch me again." Still, notwithstanding Dixie's resolution never again to act the part of spy, it was sometime before he forgot the first, but, alas! not the last, service he had rendered his country.

CHAPTER XXVII.

"Yet, there are some in mercy given,
To be to each a friend,
And for this precious gift of Heaven,
Our grateful thanks ascend;
Those who, when weary cares betide,
And sorrow clouds thy sky,
Will not thee scorn in haughty pride,
And coldly pass thee by;
But, in thy hour of gnawing need,
Will come with strength to thee;
True friends will prove themselves indeed—
More than they claim to be."

FROM soon after the battle of Manassas until late in the autumn, time passed with a dreary monotony that was almost unendurable to Madame Luzerne. Colonel Luzerne's unkindness, which amounted at times to brutality, rendered her life wretched, and she gladly sought oblivion of her troubles, in alleviating, as far as was in her power, the sick and wounded soldiers.

Time dragged wearily on, until finally about one month before the battle of Fort Donelson, Colonel Luzerne announced his having at last succeeded in getting transferred to what was then called the Western

army, and his intention of proceeding immediately thither.

It was with sincere regret that Madame Luzerne heard that she must part with the friends she had made in Virginia; especially the thought of parting with Dixie, who had become so dear to her, pained Madame Luzerne inexpressibly. A few minutes after Colonel Luzerne had made the announcement of his intention of going West, he left Madame Luzerne alone. As she was sitting in a deep and painful reverie, it was broken by two little arms being clasped around her neck, and the rosy cheek of Dixie was pressed to hers.

"Dixie, darling Dixie!" And then the thought that they would so very soon have to part quite overcame Madame Luzerne, and she burst into a passionate fit of weeping.

"Miss Mamie, just please stop crying, and tell me what is the matter with you!" exclaimed Dixie. Do you know, Miss Mamie, I believe that old, cross Colonel keeps

you crying half the time, and the boys down in our regiment think so too; but, if he does abuse you, he better not let me and the boys find it out;" and Dixie looked dangerously vindictive at the idea of any one daring to mistreat one whom he considered under his protection.

"My little darling, you must not even *think* such things, much less *speak* them to me," replied Madame Luzerne. "You are too young to understand what you are talking about, when you speak thus. Remember, I am Colonel Luzerne's wife, therefore, you must never speak of him again in a disrespectful manner in my presence."

"Forgive me, dear Miss Mamie," cried the little boy; "I did not intend to offend you, but it makes me so angry to think any one should dare to treat you badly. And then the boys do not like the Colonel very much, and somehow I always get to feeling just like they do, in spite of myself; for, you see, I would like to think the Colonel a jolly old fellow, for your sake."

It is ever thus with children, and young, inexperienced persons; they are influenced by their surroundings, in spite of themselves, as Dixie expressed it.

Madame Luzerne's kind heart was deeply touched by the little fellow's affectionate regard for her. Drawing him towards her, she imprinted a kiss upon his pure, young brow, while she breathed a prayer that when next they met she might find him still as true and good as he then was. But, ah, who can say what the future will bring forth? Had Marie Luzerne been gifted with foreknowledge, and had she only foreseen the circumstances under which their next meeting would take place, how much it would have added to the misery of their parting. But the knowledge was denied her that would have added agony to her already deep grief; and thus Marie Luzerne and Little Dixie parted.

Colonel Luzerne did stop but a day or two in Richmond, and but a very few days after leaving the army of Virginia they

were in Nashville, Tennessee. We must not forget to state that our old friend Eda had travelled everywhere with her mistress, as had also Taylor; Lida having remained in New Orleans. The command to which Colonel Luzerne designed reporting was, at that time, at Russellville, Kentucky; therefore, leaving his wife and servants in Nashville, Colonel Luzerne proceeded there without further delay. Very reluctantly had the Colonel submitted to the necessity of leaving his wife in Nashville, but it was impossible for him to take her with him; but consoling himself with the thought, that, as soon as he was settled at Fort Donelson, whither the troops he belonged with were ordered, he should return for her, Colonel Luzerne set out for Russellville.

Madame Luzerne had been very much fatigued by her long and tedious journey, and was glad to get an opportunity of rest. But "*l'homme propose, Dieu dispose;*" and thus it proved in the plans of Jean Luzerne, for but a very short time

elapsed before the battle of Fort Donelson and the surrender of the Confederate forces there.

It was at the memorable battle of Donelson that noble Buckner immortalized himself. When it became evident to the Confederate Generals (Buckner, Pillow, and Floyd), that they must either surrender or adopt some equally desperate measure, Floyd and Pillow (if our information is correct), advocated their "cutting their way out," so to speak; but Buckner was literally opposed to such a course, involving, as it did, such a terrible sacrifice of life, and urged a surrender. To this, Pillow and Floyd would not consent to, each having a very good reason for not wishing to fall into the hands of the enemy. Finally, however, it was so arranged that General Buckner should remain and surrender the fort; while the two senior officers sought safety in flight. To the entreaties of his friends, that he too would try to escape, he replied, —

"No; I will remain and share the fate of my men." And yet he was not certain that he would be looked upon, or treated, as a prisoner of war, having been concerned in some service for the South, which had rendered him peculiarly obnoxious to the Federal Government. The names of Donelson and Buckner, are indissolubly united, and no Southerner can ever think of the noble, generous, self-sacrificing Buckner, without his heart thrilling with admiration for the noble spirit that will ever be a bright star in the glorious constellation of Kentucky's heroic sons. Brave, patriotic spirit! Many were the privations and dangers thou didst endure afterward, in the cause thou hadst espoused; but no act of thine ever could have so touched the hearts of the people as thy conduct at Donelson.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

O Sorrow, cruel fellowship,
O Priestess in the vaults of Death,
Oh sweet and bitter in a breath,
What whispers from thy lying lips?

ONE day, as Madame Luzerne was sitting in the parlor of the hotel, she noticed two officers, who had entered some time before, intently observing her. Madame Luzerne looked earnestly at one of them; two years' time had made some changes, but not enough to deceive the quick eyes of affection; and, in another moment, Marie Luzerne was sobbing in the arms of Antoine Lafourche. Gerald Clifton could not witness the affecting interview between the cousins without being moved, and, brave soldier as he was, tears of sympathy ran down his sunburnt cheeks.

"O Antoine, darling Antoine! do we meet at last?" And then the past, her happy childhood, her kind friends and beautiful home, all came up before her; and,

"E'en now, the past seemed her's again."

But suddenly she recognized the gulf that separated her from her friends; and drying her tears, she said, very calmly, —

"I am wrong in thus giving way to my feelings, and rebelling against an uncontrollable destiny. For one moment, dear Antoine, I was the happy child again, roaming the woods of dear old Seviere Place. Would that the past were mine to live over again. O Antoine! you can never realize what immeasurable wretchedness one moment can entail upon us; how one mad impulse, yielded to, can blast our hopes, and curse our whole after-life. But, dear cousin, do not censure Colonel Luzerne. If we are not happy together, surely the fault was equally as much mine as his;" and the hard, firm lines that settled about the delicate mouth were distressing to witness in one so young as Marie Luzerne.

"Darling, it is useless to censure any one now, but it is unnecessary to attempt offering excuses for Luzerne's heartless, brutal treatment of you. I have seen Eda,

and she has told me everything, and may Heaven's curse come upon that man. He not only betrayed the friendship and confidence reposed in him, but even this I could have forgiven, had he treated you kindly. But his brutal treatment of you I cannot pardon, or permit to pass without its merited punishment."

"Which Jean Luzerne is *not* ready to receive from the hands of a meddlesome fool, and his inferior in rank." And the party were startled by the sudden appearance of Colonel Luzerne.

"So you thought me dead, or perhaps captured at Donelson," continued he; "but I come back to find you interfering with my domestic affairs, and filling the ears of my wife with nonsense, making her think herself very badly treated. As to your threat, I am ready to meet and answer it now, if necessary;" and Jean Luzerne, perfectly insane with passion, would have struck Antoine with the heavy sword and scabbard which he held in his hand; but again, the

blow intended for another fell upon the head of his young wife. Colonel Luzerne did not wait to see whether he had killed his wife or not, but hastily left the parlor. Antoine and Lieutenant Clifton, too much occupied with the senseless girl, to notice for a moment her brutal husband, Jean Luzerne found no barrier to his exit from the room.

An hour after, Antoine received the following letter from him: —

"NASHVILLE, ——, 1862.

"CAPTAIN LAFOURCHE, — I know the consequence of the act I committed this afternoon. I know that act entails ruin upon my prospects in the South, for which I cannot say I am sorry — least of all, to you. My heart never has been very much affected by the destinies and hopes of the South. My own interests are far dearer to me than the cause of the South. I would, possibly, have to risk my life in a duel, and very probably be cashiered, if I remain and

brave the future here. I am not mad fool enough to do this. I am sorry that I have not an opportunity of bidding you farewell; but possibly I may have the pleasure of meeting you upon some battle-field, where the *warm* reception you will meet, will make amends for any fancied coldness in our present parting. You will find enclosed my bank account in Richmond. The money rightfully belongs to you, as it is the amount received from the sale of furniture in New Orleans, which you were so obliging as to place in my house. Present my kind regards to your fair cousin, and to your friend, Gerald Clifton. When you receive this, dear cousin, I shall be with the 'boys in blue.'

"Respectfully thine,

"JEAN LUZERNE."

Early next morning, the following notice appeared in the city papers:—

"Yesterday evening, soon after sunset, the pickets at the northern boundaries of our

lines were startled by the sudden appearance of a Colonel, whose intention of deserting to the enemy was so unmistakable, that they fired upon him, after his refusal to surrender. The Federals came to his assistance, and our pickets were unable to capture the traitor and deserter; but he was undoubtedly mortally wounded, as the men saw him fall from his horse. For the sake of the noble family to which his wife belongs, we withhold his name.

"Further information states that the above deserter was undoubtedly killed."

Thus were the chains of our heroine at last broken, and she was free, and with friends again. It was two or three weeks before she was restored to health. Before Madame Luzerne had recovered, the army had evacuated Nashville, and General Johnson's headquarters were established at Murfreesboro. About the time of Marie Luzerne's complete restoration to health, Antoine received an order to go to Kentucky upon

business for the government. Captain Lafourche immediately set out upon his dangerous journey, taking with him Lieutenant Clifton, and (at her earnest request) his cousin.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"Oh that my mother's arms were around me now,
That her hand would linger one moment on my brow."

CAPTAIN Lafourche returned from Kentucky previous to the battle of Shiloh and participated in that terrible battle. Gerald Clifton was also on the field. Immediately after the fighting ceased, Marie came with a surgeon to the battle-field and rendered material assistance in the care of the wounded. Soon after the battle of Shiloh, and while the wounded were even yet on the field, awaiting removal to Corinth, Captain Lafourche sought his cousin, who was assisting the surgeons, and informed her that a boy wished to see "Mamie." So engrossed was Madame Luzerne with her work of mercy, that she did not for a moment think who the boy could be, when Captain Lafourche remarked, —

"The boy informs me that you knew him in Virginia very intimately, and that he is called 'Little Dixie.' The child followed the Fourth Kentucky regiment into the battle,

and before the soldiers even knew of his presence upon the field, he was mortally wounded by a chance shot from the lines of the enemy. The surgeon who examined his wound informs me he can survive but a very short time. But let us hasten, my dear cousin, to the poor child, for his extreme youth and beauty, combined with his present suffering, and the sure prospect of so early and terrible a death, would touch a heart of stone."

Soon they were by the rude cot upon which rested the poor boy. Never did Marie Luzerne experience more acute agony than she did at that moment. Little Dixie lay upon his hard bed, his sunny curls matted with gore from a fearful wound just over the heart. His cheeks, but recently rosy with health, and careless, childish happiness, now pallid with the awful hue of death. The bright eyes, so lately sparkling with boyish glee, or flashing out from their glorious depths the noble courage, the purity of principle, the reckless bravery which is

ever characteristic of the sons of the "dark and bloody ground."

There lay the youngest and fairest of Kentucky's sons who had espoused the Southern cause; his sweet, young life rapidly ebbing away with the crimson tide flowing from the ghastly wound in his breast.

For a moment, his fast glazing eyes brightened when he saw and recognized Madame Luzerne.

"Oh, I am so glad, darling Miss Mamie, that you have come. I heard the Captain there speak your name to the doctor, and I wanted so much to see you. I am hurt mighty bad, Miss Mamie, and am suffering so much; but I have not cried once. The doctor says I am every inch a soldier. I have seen so many of the boys die, and maybe I shall die, too, I feel so strangely. If I should die, write and tell mamma all about it; and be sure to tell her that the Captain was not to blame that I got killed. Tell mamma that I was not afraid to die, that I never did swear once, and every

night I said 'Our Father;' and now, Miss Mamie, let me kiss you once more. Don't you remember, I used to tell you that you were not quite so sweet as the ladies at home in old Kentucky. You are, though, but I have not seen any others that were so. But I am so tired and sleepy, kiss me good-night, Miss Mamie; and please, say 'Our Father' for me;" and the poor boy lifted his little bloody arms, and clasped them around the neck of Madame Luzerne. Very gently she clasped him in her arms, and whispered to Antoine the request that he would quickly find Father J——, a chaplain she had met upon the battle-field. The good priest came, and administered the last holy sacrament to the dying boy. Marie Luzerne then repeated for him that sweet prayer of our Lord's, and scarcely was it concluded, when, with one faint sigh, the little arms fell lifeless by his side, and the soul of Little Dixie left its frail tenement of clay for the better, brighter world. Madame Luzerne, with great difficulty, pro-

cured means of transportation for the corpse, and had it decently buried near Corinth.

O Little Dixie! you were the youngest and fairest of Kentucky's noble sons, who offered up their lives upon the altar of the South; and, although there were many *bearded* warriors whose names swell that list to a fearful extent, yet there was not one heart that was with thine stilled in death which possessed more true courage, or genuine, native nobility of character than the young hero of Shiloh. Had you lived, little darling, the scarcely opening bud would have expanded into a glorious flower, that would have been another bright star in the galaxy of Kentucky's gifted sons.

After the battle of Shiloh, and finally the evacuation of that place by the Confederate army, Captain Lafourche went with the army of General Bragg to Tennessee, and was in the terrible battle of Murfreesboro. Gerald Clifton followed his young Captain everywhere, and even in the thickest of the fight was by his side.

We have failed to name one of the most important characters of our story for some time, namely, young Adrian. He had entered the service as second Lieutenant of Captain Lafourche's company, and caring more for the pleasure of the society of friends than promotion, had remained in the same position. Finally, Captain Lafourche had been promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel of his regiment, and Gerald Clifton became Captain of the company, and Henri Adrian its first Lieutenant. It was just before the battle of Chickamauga, and consequently about a year and a half after the death of Jean Luzerne, that Captain Lafourche, Lieutenant Clifton, and Lieutenant Adrian, visited Madame Luzerne in Atlanta, where she was stopping at that time. During all those months that had elapsed since their last parting, the love Marie Luzerne had inspired in Henri's heart had burned steadily and constantly, notwithstanding its seeming hopelessness. Now they met, and she was free!

But would she smile upon his love? That

was a question that Henri's heart often asked itself, but finally he had ventured to tell his hopes and fears to Captain Lafourche.

"My dear friend, do not think me superstitious, but I have a strange presentiment that in the coming contest I shall fall. In such an event, Marie will be entirely unprotected, far from home, among strangers. Believe me, nothing will give me greater pleasure than to use my influence with my sweet cousin in your behalf. I had hoped Marie would yet be the wife of friend Clifton, but now that I know you, I should not know how to choose between you; and then, I do not think Gerald will ever marry — ah! Gerald," and Colonel Lafourche confronted Captain Clifton.

"What prophecy was that you were making in regard to my future?" asked Gerald.

"Why, our friend Adrian is deeply in love, and is imploring of me to intercede with his lady-love for him," laughingly replied Colonel Lafourche.

"Who — if I may ask — is the fortunate fair one who has succeeded in winning our noble chum's heart?"

"Why, really, I suppose I can answer your question, Captain Clifton, as your legal knowledge may be required in the case," gayly continued Colonel Lafourche. "You see, our young friend is so anxious to become a relative of mine, that he requests my permission to seek the aid of Madame Marie in bringing about the much-to-be-desired relationship."

Poor Gerald! it would have been better to have permitted that question to have remained unasked, than to endure the pain its answer elicited. In one brief moment, Gerald knew that he loved Marie, and that she was lost to him forever. But calmly — after one brief moment of inward struggle — he congratulated Henri upon his prospect of success; and then he walked to his tent, to seek resignation to his disappointment.

We, therefore, having enlightened our readers in regard to the object of our

friend's visit to Atlanta, will continue our story. Upon their arrival in Atlanta, Colonel Lafourche and Lieutenant Adrian called immediately and were received by Marie with her old impulsiveness and vivacity. The past was almost forgotten, or if remembered at all, only as a dream. Thus we find, in our still youthful heroine, almost the bright little girl whom we introduced to our readers in the early part of our story.

"Why, Marie, you are positively growing beautiful," exclaimed Colonel Lafourche; "it is nothing to marvel at, that you are stealing the hearts of all the young officers in my regiment, not even excepting the grave philosopher Clifton, who blushes and turns pale at the mere mention of your name. But I have an engagement for just one-half hour, when I will return for you, Lieutenant Adrian. *Au revoir*, Monsieur and Madame;" and Colonel Lafourche, laughing, withdrew from the parlor. And in that brief half-hour was to be decided the destinies of two hearts.

At first, Marie was frightened at the idea of her listening to words of love from other lips than those of her cousin's; but soon she grew calm again, and for the first time seemed to realize that she was free, and that Adrian loved her, and that from her first acquaintance she had loved him. At last, the weary heart had found rest; at last, had a just heaven rewarded poor Marie for her many weary months of suffering. Had she ever loved Luzerne? Was this her first love? Most assuredly it was. Now was the sweet dream of her girlhood realized; at last, she had found human perfection. Before the lovers realized the lapse of time, Antoine returned. At the earnest request of Colonel Lafourche and Lieutenant Adrian, Marie consented to the marriage taking place immediately. Therefore, on the very day upon which they were to return to the army, in the church in Atlanta, they were married. Father Francis, being in the city at the time, officiated in this, one of the most solemn ceremonies of the Church.

CHAPTER XXX.

I've fondly knelt at twilight hour,
And breathed thy name in pray'r,
When not an ear, save His alone,
My trembling voice could hear;
When twinkling stars — like angels' eyes —
Gazed lovingly on me,
I've knelt me in the mossy glade,
And prayed, beloved, for thee.

IMMEDIATELY after the marriage, the three soldiers set out on their return to the army. Antoine's parting with his cousin was agonizing to both. They seemed to realize that they would meet no more on earth. Marie clung to her cousin in uncontrollable grief, and her agony did not lessen his.

"Remember, darling, if anything happens to him, you have me to protect you; to live — yes, if necessary, to die — for you," whispered the noble young Adrian.

"I know it, dear Henri," replied Marie; "but you, who know, darling Adrian, can realize how terrible this parting is to me; especially with this awful presentiment forcing itself upon me that we will meet no

more. Oh! I feel that Antoine will give up his noble life in the coming battle, as I have seen so many before him. Henri, will you not make me one promise, the first I have ever asked at your hands? Father Francis will be upon the battle-field, and when you see sure indications of a battle, may I not come to you? You see, Father Francis will take care of me; and then, if one of my loved ones should fall, will I not be there and have the mournful pleasure of performing the last sad offices for them? Will you promise, Henri? This is my first request, remember."

"You have my promise," replied Henri; "but I am sorry, my darling, that the fulfilment of your request will entail so much danger and hardship upon you."

"I have your promise," exclaimed Marie, joyfully; "now do not think of me in connection with dangers and hardships. Remember, I am a soldier's wife, and must not shrink from dangers, especially where duty and inclination call."

Thus they parted. But in the dreary hotel at Atlanta, a few days after, Marie received the terrible summons that called her upon the battle-field of Chickamauga.

The battle is over; the wounded are being attended to; and all is bustle and confusion.

Upon a stretcher rests the form of a noble officer. The surgeon who is standing beside him has just pronounced his doom; and in a few hours, nay even minutes, one of the last descendants of the noble house of Lafourche will bid farewell to earth, and rejoin those who have gone before.

With the exception of the two little children, Marie and Louis were almost the last of the family; and Marie was (with the two children) its only representatives in America, as Louis had taken his wife and gone to France, as he considered it would not be very pleasant to be in a country where the waves of civil war were surging over it; therefore was Marie the only living adult representative of the family, or rather, she soon would be so.

"Adrian! Where is Adrian?" exclaimed the dying officer; and as Henri bent, with tearless agony, over his suffering relative, Colonel Lafourche grasped his hand, and said, —

"Listen to me, Henri. A few days ago, I committed to your charge one whom I loved more than my own life — more than all else combined — not even excepting my wife and children in far-off Texas. For Marie had, from the first hour I received her in my arms, become a part of my life. Yet my love for her was pure, as it was deep and constant; no breath of passion came to mar, with its blighting, the holy flowers of affection. My darling became a part of my very existence. To watch the glorious child expanding into womanhood, without losing the natural childlike graces of mind and heart, and, above all, her truthfulness, was my chief delight.

"But I made one mistake. I permitted her to grow up with perfect faith and confidence in her fellow-beings, and it was this

that came so nearly wrecking her happiness for life. For, had she not had implicit faith in man's honor, she could never have been duped into that wretched marriage. But it is all past now. I mention her only fault to tell you it was my own mistake; for to me she was like pure wax, and I could mould her young heart at will, so easy was it to take impressions.

"In justice, Marie should have half the estate Louis holds in right of his father's will; but I would never wish the matter contested by law. If you both survive the war, and it ends successfully, you will not find your bride portionless, for there is a large sum of money in Richmond, that I have placed there to her account: you will find my bank-book with my papers. But where is Marie? I do not see her?"

Marie, when the feeble voice of her cousin called her, knelt by his side and received his farewell kiss. And oh, believe me, reader, she did not at that moment regret that she had braved the terrors of a

battle-field, to have the mournful pleasure of being with noble Antoine in his last hour.

"Marie, listen; one speaks who is almost beyond the pale of mortality. I seem to see your future life all plain before me. Do not start, sweet cousin, it will be one of trouble, short and terrible. Yes, friends, in a few brief months, not one of the name and race will live upon the soil of America. Yes, even my own little family will soon rejoin me yonder. Short as your life will be, sweet Marie, glory and honor await thee in the future; they will light thy otherwise gloomy pathway and gild it with golden brilliancy. Be ever true and noble as you now are; and remember, into your hands I commit the honor of the Lafourche."

The dying soldier's voice had been gradually growing weaker, and at last it was but a feeble whisper, and then ceased altogether. Adrian, who was supporting his head, was the first to observe that the noble spirit had taken its flight. It would be impossible to depict the uncontrollable grief of Marie, or

the less demonstrative of that of Captain Clifton.

Frequently do we see the words of the dying forgotten or all unheeded in after life. But the dying words of Antoine Lafourche would never be forgotten by his afflicted cousin.

In pursuance of his own request, Antoine was buried upon the battle-field; and there, with many another brave spirit, awaits the resurrection morn.

CHAPTER XXXI.

I've breathed thy name in strange delight,
In midnight's solemn hours,
When clouds obscured fair Luna's light,
And muttering thunders roar,
Or when no bolt from Heaven was sent,
No sound fell on mine ear,
My spirit bowed before God's throne,
To breathe thy name in pray'r!

AT last, 1864 came, bringing in its train ruin and disaster, not only to our heroine, but to many more in Northern Georgia. Finally, the Confederate army evacuated Atlanta; and then Madame Adrian, as we must now term our heroine, took up her residence at Macon, Georgia. But in the disastrous battle of Jonesboro, young Adrian fell, and it was impossible to recover his body.

Upon Gerald Clifton devolved the painful duty of bearing the news to his wife. When Captain Clifton entered Madame Adrian's presence, the expression of his countenance answered her anxious, questioning look better than words could have done. With a shriek, that would ring in his ears

until death, whenever his thoughts reverted to the subject, she fell senseless at his feet. It was hours after before she was restored to consciousness, and it was weeks before she appeared more than a mere wreck of herself.

Nothing but the birth of a babe, which happened some weeks after, would have, even in the slightest degree, awakened in the heart of the terribly tried girl even a semblance of interest in life. But the tiny stranger very emphatically manifested his distaste to being neglected; and between her interest in the babe — upon whom she bestowed the names of both Antoine and Henri — and the garrulousness of old Eda, the poor girl began to look something like her former self. But in the winter of 1864, just as Madame Adrian had completed her preparations to go to Richmond, to establish her home there for an indefinite period, the ruthless hand of death snatched her last remaining treasure from her. In two short hours, her baby-boy sickened and died.

O God of mercy and justice! why could not one tie be spared Marie Adrian to bind her to life? Oh, to a woman thus bereft, life would seem indeed unendurable. But, child of earth, arraign not the justice of God. He, in his all-seeing wisdom, doeth all things well, as the sequel, even in this instance, will prove.

Gerald Clifton procured leave of absence, and accompanied the poor girl to Richmond, and after seeing her comfortably established there, he returned to the army.

For some time after her arrival in Richmond, Madame Adrian still continued the listless, aimless existence she had fallen into upon the death of her babe. At last, she was roused from her lethargy. Death had not yet completed his work. There were still other victims to be felled by his unerring and relentless sickle.

Our poor old friend Eda was the next who was claimed by the grim monster. Calmly and peacefully she passed away, and her young mistress was indeed alone,

for poor Taylor could not supply her place, notwithstanding his faithfulness.

It was not very long after the death of old Eda, when the Confederate authorities concluded it would be impossible to maintain their position in Richmond and Petersburg, and Richmond was given up.

Richmond! beautiful Richmond! Where is it now?

Behold yonder long expanse of blackened walls and smouldering ashes, that once formed a part of the fair city which was Virginia's pride, aye, and the glory of the whole sunny South.

We have frequently seen attempts at description of the fall of the Confederate Capitol, but the scene was indeed indescribable; and all attempt at description on my part would meet the fate of others — that is, fail of giving even a faint conception of that most terrible scene of the war.

But it was right that it should be thus terribly sublime, — the death of a nation, which for four long years had sustained

itself even amidst privations and despair, and overwhelming numbers. And what are those tiny papers which we see fluttering in the breeze? It is the money then thrown away, the surest evidence the Confederacy is indeed dead.

A day or two after the fall of Richmond, I was presented with the following impromptu verses, written upon the back of a five-dollar bill. The author is unknown to me; but I understood he was a private in the Confederate army: —

Representing nothing on earth now,
And naught in the waters below it;
As a pledge of the nation that's dead and gone,
Keep it, dear friend, and show it.

Show it to those who will lend an ear
To the tale this paper can tell,
Of Liberty born, of the Patriot's dream,
Of the storm-cradled nation that fell.

Too poor to possess the precious ore,
And too much of a stranger to borrow,
We issued today our promise to pay,
And hoped to redeem on the morrow.

The days rolled on, and weeks became years,
But our coffers were empty still;
Coin was so scarce, that the treasury quaked
If a dollar dropped into the till.

But the faith that was in us was strong indeed,
And our poverty well discerned;
And these little checks represented the pay
Our suffering volunteers earned.

We knew it had hardly a value in gold,
Yet as gold our soldiers received it;
It gazed in our eyes with a promise to pay,
And each patriot soldier believed it.

But our boys thought little of price or of pay,
Or of bills that oft were overdue;
We well knew if it brought us bread for today,
'Twas the best our country could do.

Keep it; it tells our history all over,
From the birth of its dream to the last;
Modest, and born of the angel of Hope,
Like the hope of success it passed.

And where is he, that brave spirit which stood at the helm of this wrecked government-ship for four long years, and who at last had the inexpressible agony of beholding his precious charge dashed upon the treacherous rocks? Go with me within the dungeon walls of Fortress Monroe, and see an aged and enfeebled man chained within a felon's cell; and behold how *America* shows her *gratitude* to a faithful public servant who had spent the best years of his life in her service. And now, in his riper age,

just because he happens to cherish and advocate opinions which she considers detrimental to her interest, he is deprived of liberty; nay, his very life threatened.

Oh, most grateful America! Heaven defer me from thy gratitude!

CHAPTER XXXII.

"In all creation I stand alone,
Still to the rocks my dream a soul shall find,
Mine arms shall wreath around the stone,
My grief shall feel a listener in the wind;
My joy — its echo in the caves shall be!
Fool, if you will — fool for sweet sympathy!"

THE house in which our heroine resided was burned, and every particle of her wardrobe destroyed. Madame Adrian's money was, of course, nearly all invested in government bonds, which became worthless upon the overthrow of the Confederate government.

Thus, early in the spring of 1865, we find Madame Adrian friendless and almost penniless. For some days, she did not know what to do, or what course to pursue in the future. Finally, after the surrender of General Johnson, Gerald Clifton returned to Richmond, and offered to assist her. Any assistance, other than his advice, Madame Adrian refused. Aided by the latter, however, she was very soon ready to return home, or rather to New Orleans, for home

she had none upon the face of God's earth; all was swept away — friends, fortune, everything that would render life desirable or even endurable. But still, the earnest wish to see New Orleans became, after awhile, almost all the interest she had in life. But even in this darling wish she was fated to meet disappointment. Just as everything was ready for their return, Madame Adrian became too ill to travel, and must necessarily be left in Virginia. It seemed as if her last hope in life went out when she found she must see the troops from Louisiana go home without her. But it was only for a short time this feeling held the ascendancy; soon her usual judgment and good sense predominated over this mere momentary weakness, and she calmly talked over her future prospects with Gerald Clifton. He was very loth to leave Madame Adrian in Virginia, even with the many kind friends whose acquaintance she had formed, and strongly advocated her writing to Louis Lafourche, and placing herself under his protection.

To this entreaty, Madame Adrian at last so far yielded as to address a letter to Paris, to Louis, telling him of her situation. Another letter was written to Louise, the widow of Antoine Lafourche. After some time, the answer came to Louise's letter. Soon after Antoine's departure to the army, one of the children had died. Just about the time of the breaking up of the war, Louise — who had taken up her residence in New Orleans — lost her other babe, and then she proved that she had entirely forgotten him who was sleeping upon the battle-field of Chickamauga, by uniting herself in marriage with a Federal officer who belonged to General Butler's army.

It has frequently been a subject of deep thought and much speculation with me, if persons of very humble origin in life, in being raised to a high position by marriage, are not always influenced by mercenary motives. I have sometimes thought the views poor Camille Lafourche cherished, up to the hour of her death, were very

probably the correct ones after all. I never approved of *mesalliances*, either on the part of male or female. Oh, how often do we see a young and inexperienced daughter of a noble family wreck her own happiness for life, nay, in many instances, blast her hope of eternity, by one of those miserable *mesalliances*. Neither are the victims to this scourge confined alone to women. Many noble men place their names and honor in the hands of women — their inferiors — and find out, when too late, the misery, nay, in many instances, dishonor, they have entailed upon themselves by so doing.

Anxious as Gerald Clifton was to once more behold the beloved city of New Orleans, the home of his adoption, he could not consent to leaving Madame Adrian until he placed her in her brother's care.

At last, early in July, a letter came from Paris, which explains itself without further comment from us: —

"PARIS, ——, 1865.

"MADAME ADRIAN, — Your letter received. In reply, would say: When you married, and by so doing displeased your relatives, you severed all your previous claims upon them. Still, I do not wish to see or know of a relative of my husband's really wanting the necessaries of life. Captain Clifton, your friend, states in his letter that you are so reduced as to be even in want. I shall therefore enclose twenty dollars, which, in the position in which you must necessarily live in the future, will be of considerable assistance to you. Rather than have you go into another family as a teacher or seamstress, I would employ you myself, but my children are scarcely old enough to commence their education; and, as to taking you as a seamstress, I am fearful you would not exactly suit, as they are awful stylish here, and persons have to sacrifice their ideas of economy upon the altar of fashion. As we have spent a great deal of money, and do so still, we cannot

afford to support you, unless, as I said before, it was so you could in some measure earn your support by filling a situation in our family. You will find no difficulty in procuring a situation in a family or school, as my husband informs me you are very accomplished, and that an awful amount of money was spent on your education. Then, teaching is a very respectable profession. To tell the truth, I taught myself before I was married, and saved money enough to go to the Springs one summer; there, I met your brother, and we were married. Now, you are young, and may be equally fortunate as myself. As the Southerners must be wretchedly poor, I will give you the address of my father, who will assist you in getting a situation up in Vermont. I will also write to him: 'Thomas Bennet, Bennington, Vermont.'

"Wishing you well, I subscribe myself,

"Yours truly,

"ANNIE LAFOURCHE."

"How dare this woman, on whom your brother has lavished a princely fortune, thus insult you?" angrily exclaimed Captain Clifton, upon reading the letter.

"Stop, dear friend," calmly replied Madame Adrian. "It is no more than I expected from one who has been raised by marriage from penury to affluence. Antoine has told me a great deal about them; and I do not, I confess, feel at all surprised at the receipt of that letter. Yet, in justice to my brother, I do not think he even knew of my application to himself and wife; *she*, evidently, has taken all the responsibility of the affair upon herself. But, dear friend, *this* has given me the impetus I needed; *this* insult has aroused my pride. God has given me talents that have heretofore remained dormant. Aided by those talents, and the fierce desire to avenge an insult offered to my family through me by this upstart, I will yet carve out a position in the world so high that this shoddy aristocrat, with all her pretensions, cannot aspire to an equality

with me. Do not, dear friend, longer delay here on my account. Your business requires your attention; your friends anxiously await your coming. Go to them. Do not sacrifice your worldly interests for one whom fate has left nothing in life to live for, but ambition and revenge. Go back, Captain Clifton, to our sweet, sunny South; leave me to fulfil my destiny. Did not the dying Antoine prophesy glory and honor for me in the future, and a short but brilliant life? By the sacred cross, his prophecy shall be realized by me; and this ignorant, heartless plebeian shall yet sue to me for pardon for this insult. The want of fortune will debar me from association with those whom my birth and education entitle me to consider no more than my equals; but oh, thank God, genius and talent are not monopolized by the favorites of fortune. Through the medium of the pen, I will commune with the hearts of the noblest of our land. The American soul is surely not so completely absorbed in the

accumulation of money that it cannot appreciate and acknowledge talent and merit, even though the aspirant for its favor be a penniless, friendless woman."

"But, Madame," replied Captain Clifton; "you, of all others, are not fitted by nature and education to successfully struggle with the world. Especially in a literary career, you will have much to contend with, which you little dream of now. But will you not permit me to assist you in some manner before I leave? O Marie! forgive me, but I cannot part from you, perhaps forever, without telling you I love you. Yes, years ago, when I saw you at the residence of Father S——, — the time when you forged those terrible bonds which, for a long time, cursed your life, — I loved you in that hour, and my love for you has only strengthened with time. Will you not give *me* the right to provide for your future? Crush those mad ambitions, hopes, and plans from your heart, if you would ever again know peace. Believe me, they will never

have fruition; and, after awhile, when, by nourishing, you give them strength, how terrible will be your disappointment when you find you have been madly chasing a golden butterfly which has eluded your eager grasp and escaped. Dearest Marie, will you not speak the word that will give me the right to protect you in the future from similar insults to the one you have just received, and from every care and sorrow within the power of man to ward off? Oh, I cannot, dearest Marie, leave you here alone and unprotected;" and Captain Clifton threw his arms around the slight form before him and clasped her passionately to his heart.

For one moment, the feeling of protection, of perfect trust and security, which Marie experienced, caused her to waver from her purpose. But oh, surely, at that moment, the spirit of some loved one hovered near and dictated the answer. O Antoine! didst thou not, in that hour, watch over the destinies of thy loved one?

"Gerald, dear Gerald, my one earthly friend, I never dreamed before you loved me; but now that the sweet knowledge is mine, you have double claims for my regard; for your love expressed for me in such an hour, combined with the warm friendship existing between you and Antoine, has awakened a feeling in my heart I had previously thought myself incapable of ever experiencing again. I cannot at present make you the promise you ask of me; but in two years, with either ambition satisfied or disappointed, I will be your wife, provided you think me worthy waiting so long for, and you see no one you love better — which latter is not improbable;" and Madame Adrian smiled through her tears at the aggrieved look Captain Clifton's countenance assumed, at what he termed her unjust suspicions.

After trying repeatedly to induce Marie to change her mind, Captain Clifton was at last forced to desist, and return home without her. Poor Taylor, at his mistress's request, accompanied Captain Clifton, as she

had not the means of taking care of him; and feeling that, for her sake, Gerald would act as his future guardian. Taylor would have much preferred to remain and share the fortunes of his mistress, but this she would not permit him to do, and very unwillingly, he departed for New Orleans with Captain Clifton.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"True courage scorns
To vent her prowess in a storm of words;
But to the valiant, *action* speaks alone."

"The intent, and not the deed,
Is in our power; and, therefore, who dares greatly,
Does greatly."

"I dare all that becomes *woman;*
She who dares more, is none."

BY the sale of an elegant and expensive watch and chain, Marie Adrian had obtained money enough to meet her wants and those of Taylor, up to the time of Captain Clifton and the boy's leaving for home, but after that, she began to think it was time to form some plans for the future.

"A letter for you, Madame," said a servant, entering her room, about a week after Captain Clifton's departure.

Madame Adrian received the letter with a bright blush, well knowing from whom it came. Captain Clifton had gone by way of New York City, as he had business which called him there, and his letter was consequently dated from that place.

"NEW YORK, ——, 1865.

"MY DARLING MARIE, —

"What is the past to us, Marie? — have we not suffered?
Let us forget it as a nightmare dream,
Put it away from us — drown all despairing —
Sink it deep in oblivion's stream.

"There is new life for us — life and its treasures —
Let us enjoy them; — let life be a dream —
Never to 'waken from this side of heaven,
When we have passed over the beautiful stream.

"It is thus I would have my Marie feel; it is thus I would have her forget the bitter past. Would that you could have done so, and returned with me to New Orleans.

"There are so many things, when parted, I would say to you, which, were we together, would shrink away unuttered into some deep corner of the mind. Feelings the tongue cannot express recoil upon an aching heart, and make us feel what a mockery and how bitter is life.

"I know you are entering upon a new era in life, hence my anxiety upon your account. This anxious foreboding will obtrude itself, notwithstanding my but too perfect

knowledge of your indomitable will and perseverance. I know you will shrink from nothing. I can but feel that, upon the altar of ambition, you are sacrificing hope, happiness, love, all — everything the heart most yearns for. And with those cast under foot, literary glory will, in time, become your god; at its altar alone will you worship. The golden laurels of literary fame will alone have value in your sight; the more humble tributes of love and friendship will be scorned by you, or treated with indifference. For why, you will ask, should I regard one, or even half-a-dozen hearts, while I reign queen of thousands?

"You have promised, in two years, to become my wife; be your ambition satisfied or disappointed, I know you will fulfil that pledge. Will you not promise me also, darling, that if, previous to that time, you become tired of the adulations of the world, or wearied with the professions of hollow-hearted friends, you would ask rest from such a life, will you not

let me know? Rest assured, no one will rejoice more in your success than I will.

"Onward, upward, may you climb, until ambition's immortal crown shall glitter on your noble brow. With patience may you toil up the steep ascent to the Temple of Fame, and there, in burning letters, inscribe your name upon her broad scroll. May patience and perseverance be your motto; let love be your barque; hope be your sheet-anchor; and truth, the banner under which you sail. And may time, that sheds his blight on all, only turn to you the brighter side, bringing happiness and sweet contentment, and sometimes thoughts of one — an attached soul-friend.

"I shall write you very often, and hope to hear from you accordingly. And now, dear one, when those to whom you are surrounded prove false, remember there is one heart, which, while life remains, is in and through all circumstances wholly thine, that of

"GERALD CLIFTON."

"Unjust, I think," sighed Marie. "Did I think his prophecy would be fulfilled, I would even now swerve in my determination. But he is mistaken. I feel that I can climb to the topmost round of the ladder of Fame, and still remain unchanged in heart. Surely, appreciation of friendship is not incompatible with the acquisition of fame? Could I think so, I should sadly waver in my purpose. For what would literary success be worth, if purchased with purity and truth? But he must be wrong. I can succeed, and still be all Gerald desires, and Antoine, too, could have wished me." And Marie Adrian's mind wandered off into a dreamy reverie, from which she was aroused by a knock at her door.

Upon opening it, she was quite surprised to see Mr. B——, her landlord. He was one of the wealthiest gentlemen in the city. His chief residence was in the country, but since the war, he had resided the greater part of the time in the city. Upon the occupation of Richmond by the Federal

army, for the better protection of his property, he had taken several officers into his family as boarders. By chance, Madame Adrian had been referred to his house. Upon the present occasion, he entered the room of his guest, and, unasked, seated himself upon a sofa.

"I understand," said Mr. B——, "that you are entirely alone and unprotected, Madame, and furthermore, if you will permit me to add, very destitute. Now, you know my wife is living, although she is deaf and otherwise afflicted, consequently I cannot make you an offer of marriage, although, did circumstances admit of it, I should be proud to do so. Well — ahem — to make my story short, if you will accept my love and protection, I will settle sufficient property upon you, to render you independent for life;" and the unprincipled scoundrel would have pressed a loathsome kiss upon the pure lips of Marie Adrian. Before he could accomplish his purpose, she sprang away from him, and while scorn and utter

contempt flashed from her eyes, she exclaimed, —

"How dare you, here, under the very roof with your wife, thus insult a woman, because you fancy she happens to be alone and unprotected? But in this conclusion you are mistaken: I am not unprotected. Yonder, in the glorious heavens, dwell an angel band, who constantly watch over me. They are the purified souls of beloved and honored relatives, gone before me to praise and worship in a more perfect manner the All-wise Father. Neither am I alone on earth; on yonder steeple, glittering in the glorious sunlight, is a cross, symbolical of a faith which is ever willing and able to protect its adherents. Now, begone from my presence. Within an hour, I shall leave your house, and never, with my consent, will we meet again."

The disappointed and crestfallen Mr. B—— left Madame Adrian's presence, and for one moment courage failed, and, between her bitter sobs, she murmured,—

"And is this the commencement of my struggle with the world? O Gerald! if it is to be always thus, you were right. I am unfitted to follow out the destiny I have marked out for myself. But all are not like that man. Dear, good Father Francis is still at the church. I will go to him, and ask his assistance."

Soon she was in the presence of the kind-hearted priest, who lent an attentive ear to her relations of her troubles. By his assistance, she procured a small room with a good old lady who was renting her rooms, and within the hour, as she had proposed, she left the house of Mr. B——.

Then commenced her toils — trials that would have appalled any other heart than that of a woman who had no other interest in life but the accomplishment of a great purpose — and everything, even the most gigantic difficulties, would be swept aside as mere straws from her pathway.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"Oh, I have suffered till my brain became
Distinct with woe, as is the skeleton leaf,
Whose green hath fretted off its fibrous frame,
And bare to our immortality of grief."

IT would be impossible to attempt narrating even a very small part of the trials and struggles a woman would naturally encounter, who was treading the path our heroine had entered upon, without rendering any story even indefinitely long. We shall, therefore, leave it for the imagination of our readers, and omit the relation of the many troubles and heartaches which fell to the lot of Marie Adrian during the first year after the breaking up of the war.

She had managed to support herself in the humble manner in which she now lived by sewing and embroidery, and sometimes she was paid for some story or sketch which she occasionally sent to literary papers and magazines. But it was seldom this latter was the case, for there are always

so many young aspirants for literary honors, that a nameless, friendless person entering the list has to struggle a long time before their frantic efforts at composition will command a price in market, or in many instances be recognized so far as to receive publication. Our heroine's experience was no exception to that of many others who have entered the literary field, with the sanguine hope of very soon gathering "green laurels" and "golden honors." To be sure, her contributions, although submitted to some of the principal editors and publishers of our country, had not, in a single instance, been refused, as unfit for publication; but pride forbade Madame Adrian's stating, in a private note to the editor, her destitute situation, and thus appealing to his kindness of heart. Such an appeal might have been the means of procuring her remuneration for the productions of her pen, even had their real merit not altogether justified it.

During the long, dreary summer and au-

tumn that followed the breaking up of the war, Father Francis was of invaluable assistance to Madame Adrian in all her troubles and sufferings.

To the noble Sisters of the Order of St. Joseph, too, she was indebted for innumerable favors. O Christian priest! and holy sisters! worthy laborers in the vineyard of Him who has promised a reward to those who even bestow a "cup of cold water to the humblest of his followers in his name," how infinitely great will be your reward, here and hereafter, for the glorious sacrifices you continually offer upon the altar of your Lord!

Madame Adrian, upon the approach of winter, became so seriously ill, that a benevolent physician who was attending upon her, expressed his opinion that she would not, in that comparatively cold climate, survive until spring; and that, if possible, she should return to New Orleans. Upon his mentioning to his patient the absolute necessity of her return home, Madame Ad-

rian frankly told him of her perfect inability so to do, on account of want of money necessary to defray her expenses upon so long a journey. The kind-hearted physician determined, on hearing this, that she should not die without an effort, at least, on his part, to save her. He laid the case before some gentlemen who were members of the Virginia Legislature, and, as it happened at that time to be in session, they passed an act granting transportation for Madame Adrian to New Orleans. The latter part of the winter of 1865 and 1866, therefore, we find Marie Adrian *en route* for New Orleans. Oh, with what feelings of mingled pain and pleasure would she gaze once more upon the dear old Crescent City! There had some of the happiest hours of her young life been passed in the old school building on C—— Street. It was there she had first known and learned to love kind *pere* Luzerne. It was there, too, she had known the sweet mother-love; and there was the tomb of her tiny babe, and her beloved father-in-law.

And last, though not least, she would meet Gerald Clifton there. This latter consideration, however, did not cause the heart of Marie Adrian to pulsate one whit faster, because the feelings she bore him were *not* those of passionate, devoted love, whose very existence, floweret-like, depended upon *its sun*. No, the sentiments existing were those of sincere friendship, mingled with many sweet, but sad memories of the past; but the emotions, or wave of love, could never again ruffle the surface of that proud heart; and then, love would have had a most powerful rival to contend with — the demon of ambition. Wherever *he* sets his mark, whatever heart *he* fires, must become the slave of this demon; there is no such thing as successfully resisting his power, and the victims must yield abject obedience to his sway.

Oh, young votaries, would that the power were ours, as you kneel at the altar of ambition, to tear the scales from your eyes, that you might see how wretchedly unsatis-

factory to the heart, even gratified ambition would be; and that perhaps nine out of every ten waste youth, health, happiness, and love, in the pursuit of a bauble which they will never grasp. And oh, the madness, the agonized yearning, that immediately possesses the young heart, once this fiend takes up his abode there.

. . . . . .

Can six years of almost constant sorrow so change one? Is that tall, haughty woman, who stands upon the deck of the vessel, as it approaches the city,—is that the Marie Lafourche we introduced to our readers in the beginning of our story? Yes, it is the same; yet it is not the same. It is the form, developed and matured, but not the spirit. That proud, cold being, is not the joyous, affectionate, passionate, little hoyden of yore. But time, and contact with the world, have they improved or marred what was once a perfect child of nature? We will note the changes but six brief years have wrought. Does one approach

her for the purpose of offering even the attentions ordinary civility requires, they are received so haughtily, so coldly, that they are not liable to make a second attempt to break down the barrier of reserve in which she had entrenched herself, or, in other words, "melt" the iceberg, as the passengers termed her. But, be charitable in your criticisms, O world; this is your handiwork; this is the transformation you have wrought; this cold, proud, suspicious woman was once a happy, confiding girl; nature's child; but you deemed the glorious work incomplete; you breathed upon that noble heart your blighting, blasting breath; and now, behold your work!

CHAPTER XXXV.

Yet *earth* no consolation brings
To mingle with these mournful sighs:
But *fervent prayer*, endowed with wings,
To bear its mission to the skies.

While tossed on Life's tempestuous wave,
What dangers wait — what storms assail;
But He who rules the storms can save,
And quell the fury of the gale.

A wand'rer on the Sea of Life,
My eyes are fixed on that blest shore
Where, free from earth, its toils and strife,
I fain would rest — life's trials o'er.

IMMEDIATELY upon her arrival in New Orleans, Madame Adrian sought employment, which she readily found; and very soon, she was able to live far more comfortably than she had done in Richmond. Madame Adrian continued her engagements with the New-York papers, to which she had been contributing, besides writing a series of letters for one of the Sunday papers. And from the success of those very letters, she "one morning awoke to find herself famous," comparatively speaking. The peculiar state of mind she had been in, since the receipt of her

sister-in-law's heartless letter, especially fitted her to write in a bitter, sarcastic, and rather exaggerated vein, which, however, seemed to take with the mass of the people, and scarcely three months elapsed after Marie Adrian landed in New Orleans before she had made her mark as a writer. Yet her success could not be attributed to her family name — proud and honored as that had been as any in the land — for she had written under a *nom de plume;* and not even the editor knew her other than as a poor but talented writer, struggling for position and a name. Poor, struggling Genius; God help thee everywhere; battling alone with the demon of poverty, envy, competition. Poor and friendless, thou didst indeed have a brave heart to enter the lists, Marie, with the world telling thee thou couldst not succeed. But bravely, nobly, did Marie Adrian prove how false were the prophecies with which the world sought to encourage her, as she struggled through the clouds into the glorious sunlight. But would Fate —

which had plucked, with relentless hand, every flower from her pathway — oh, would it not now permit her to wear the hard-earned laurel-wreath in peace? For a time, a very little time, it appeared as if fortune had indeed smiled upon her at last. But just as the goddess of success was about to bestow the coveted laurels, fate again interfered, and forbade their being awarded.

Surely, some impatient reader cries, you will not again overshadow the pathway of Marie Adrian with gloom and despair! We have not been wandering through the fields of fiction and romance, gathering sweet-scented flowers for your pleasure and gratification, but we have been writing the true and faithful history of a woman, who lived and battled with destiny, and only yielded to its decrees when physical nature finally succumbed.

Captain Clifton did not, since his return to the South, reside in New Orleans, but commenced the practice of his profession in Galveston, Texas; therefore, he and

Madame Adrian did not meet very often, but they corresponded regularly, and it is possible that Marie's success was partially owing to the constant source of encouragement these letters afforded her. Father S——, although very old, was still the ever faithful friend and adviser of Madame Adrian. Father Francis, too, had returned to his native city, and watched with no small degree of interest, the upward progress of his *protege*.

It is not to be supposed that Madame Adrian could live and write in New Orleans, and remain altogether unknown. No; the one redeeming quality in the moneyed aristocracy of America, is, their readiness to appreciate genius and talent; aye, and their willingness to patronize it too, as many a poor author can testify, to his or her sorrow.

. . . . . .

One morning, as Gerald Clifton sat in his office in Galveston, busily writing; Taylor, who still remained with him, entered with his mail. Hastily searching among the let-

ters, he at last found one which claimed his attention, and caused the color in his cheeks to assume a brighter shade and his eye to sparkle with joy. Surely a business letter would not be the cause of such pleasurable emotion? Poor Gerald! your happiness is premature; but be happy while it is within your power. To prevent the necessity of a long explanation, we give that letter in full: —

"NEW ORLEANS, S—— STREET,
"May —, 1863.

"DEAREST FRIEND, — The last terrible drop has been added to my cup of woe, and, O God! I can endure no more. Yesterday, while sitting in my room, thinking of the past, and forming plans for the future, which was opening so gloriously before me, — as I sat thus, almost perfectly happy in my ideal world, — a servant entered the room, and told me a gentleman wished to see me. Thinking it was you, I told her to show the gentleman up to my sitting-room.

In a moment, she returned, and after pointing out my room, the girl retired, and the person entered. The moment I lifted my eyes to his face, and recognized him, the chill of death seized upon my heart. Jean Luzerne stood before me. The old adage verified.

"He, it appears, had made his escape, although severely wounded, but had not met a very cordial reception from the Federals; he had, in short, filled the whole catalogue of crime and degradation, as his countenance bore but too evident traces of, and at last had returned to New Orleans. Here, he found himself forgotten, or, if remembered, shunned by those whom he had formerly known; and he was now existing in one of the lowest haunts of the city. After I had sufficiently recovered my composure to converse with him, I asked, —

"'And why, Captain Luzerne, have you come to me; you have no claims upon me? I am not now possessed of sufficient wealth to excite your cupidity.'

"'It does not now require the amount of money it once did to tempt me,' whined the loathsome wretch. 'To be sure, you have no great fortune now, but you can make money yourself, if I keep dark; which I promise to do, conditionally. You, as the widow of a Confederate officer, struggling for a position, can command the sympathies of the public, and fortune is yours. Now, I never did care particularly for you, and, as the fair Julie is still here, I don't care to claim you as my wife; but you must give me money enough to enable me to live like a gentleman. If you refuse, I will proclaim to the world the fact of your having been the mistress of Adrian; for his wife you could not have been, and I living. I will also claim you as my wife; not the wife of Jean Luzerne, the half-way-respectable sea-captain, either; but as the wife of Joe Brown — as I am now called — the gambler; and sometimes, when that profession fails, something not quite so respectable as even that profession. Yes, refuse, and your name

becomes a by-word even in the lowest dens of vice in the city. Tomorrow night, I shall call here for your answer; in the meantime, you cannot escape me.' And with that threat and vile proposition ringing in my ears, he left me.

"And does Jean Luzerne think his cruelty has totally obliterated every vestige of the Lafourche honor from my heart? Does he not know death would be welcomed by me in preference to living by means so horrible, so dishonorable, as those proposed by him? I, occupying a false position, and trading upon the public sympathies, making capital of their favor and kindness? O God! give me death instead of a life so repulsive, so utterly loathsome.

"The moment I could find strength to walk, I hurried to Father S——, and entreated his permission to enter the Order of which my old friend, Josie De La Tour, is now Mother Superior. After much entreaty, I gained his and Father Francis's consent; and I enter immediately upon my novitiate.

Yet, dearest friend, I am not unhappy; I am calm — yet it is the calmness of despair. You will blame me, I fear, for the course I have pursued; but, though the thought grieves me, yet it cannot change me from my purpose. No, Gerald, a dark curse has hung over me since the hour I became the wife of Jean Luzerne. You will say to me, 'If this man has any legal claims upon you, the law will free you; but he has not. You were the legal wife of Adrian.' But, dear friend, disgrace and ruin are inevitable. I could not have been the lawful wife of both; and, oh God! ruin — disgrace — this is the reward of all my toil. O Antoine! come to me, and bear my soul away with thine! I cannot bear it. We will meet no more on earth; but yonder, with our loved and lost, all sin and despair will be forgotten.

"Yours ever,

"MARIE."

"O heavens! Marie lost to me forever!"

and the strong man sunk to the floor, as if felled by a lightning-stroke.

. . . . . .

The year of novitiate is over, and the hour for taking those irrevocable vows has arrived. Alone in her cell, Marie awaits the coming of the Mother Superior and the Sisters, to deck her in the bridal array befitting the ceremony.

A light but firm step sounds along the hall, and Josie De La Tour, the Mother Superior, enters the cell.

"I am glad to find you so calm and resigned, sweet sister, to (what may appear to some persons) a hard fate. But, in your case, be thankful to God and our Holy Mother, that, in mercy, so glorious and acceptable an avenue of escape from so horrible a future is yours. The Sisters come to dress you for the ceremony;" and the Superior hurried away, as some of the nuns entered the cell, bearing the beautiful paraphernalia of a bride. Was it to hide from the eyes of the Sisters the

emotions that white, despairing face called up, and which — calm and cold as she appeared — Josie De La Tour could not long endure and control in Marie's presence? Before the altar kneels Marie, whilst, from

"The latticed gallery came a chant
Of psalms most saint-like, most angelical,
Verse after verse rung out how holily,
The strains returning, and still, still returning;
Methought it acted like a spell upon her,
And she was casting off her earthly dross.
Yet it was sad as sweet, and ere it closed,
Came like a dirge. Then her head was shorn,
And the long tresses in her hands were laid,
That she might fling them from her, saying, 'Thus,
Thus I renounce the world and worldly things!'
When, as she stood, her bridal ornaments
Were, one by one, removed, e'en to the last,
That she might say, flinging them from her, 'Thus,
Thus I renounce the world:' when all was changed,
And as a nun, in homeliest guise, she knelt,
Veiled in her veil, crowned with her silver crown,
That crown of lilies, as the spouse of Christ,
Well might her strength forsake her, and her knees
Fail in that hour!"

As Gerald Clifton stood with the few persons who were witnesses of the ceremony, it seemed as if each word spoken was indeed his death knell.

He stood with tearless eyes, and beheld the raven tresses of Marie shorn from her

head, which had been so often caressed by the hands of affection. Yes, he stood with tearless eyes; but ah, the

> "Tear-drops that the eye deny,
> Fall dreary on the heart."

The holy rite at last is over, and she who was once Marie Lafourche, but now will be known as Sister Anastacia, is alone in her cell. Night has cast his mantle over the earth, and all nature is sleeping. But, early, even before the gray light of dawn had commenced to illume the earth, the deep-toned bell called the nuns from their hard couches to the early mass. But its solemn tones did not arouse one sleeper in that convent. The Mother Superior noticed that Sister Anastacia was not with the others in the chapel, and therefore, as soon as her duties would permit, she hastened to her cell. And there, upon her pallet, lay Marie Lafourche, pale and cold in death. Yes, she who had for so many years travelled along the weary journey of life "alone," had died "alone," and her worn, despairing soul had

found peace and rest at last, in the presence of God. "Heart disease," the physician said; but, believe it not. "Died of a broken heart," could, in all truth, have been carved upon her urn.

Early in the forenoon, Father S—— visited the Sisters, and was much shocked to learn of the poor girl's sudden death. With him was Father Francis; and awaiting the two priests, in a carriage at the gate, was Gerald Clifton, who had witnessed the ceremony the previous day. When Father S—— found the corpse had been prepared for the grave, and lay in state in the chapel, he sent Father Francis out to the carriage to break the sad news to Captain Clifton, and to offer him the mournful pleasure of beholding the corpse, if he so desired. In a few minutes, Father Francis returned, accompanied by Gerald, and in a moment more he was alone, kneeling beside Marie's coffin. Then all his forced calmness gave way; and when, an hour after, he left the chapel, hope, and all interest in life were

gone. For, even while she lived (a nun though she was), life would have been endurable; but dead! dead! oh, it was more than he could bear.

CONCLUSION.

ONE day, Josie De La Tour was sent for to visit a poor woman living in one of the poorest huts in the city. Josie found the poor creature was dying of disease, brought upon her by want and suffering.

"What is your name?" kindly asked the Sister. "Have you no friends?"

"It matters little now, to keep my secret, since I have but a few hours to live. My name is Amy Mar. I married, contrary to the wishes of my parents, Paul Mar. He never loved me, and rendered my life wretched. At length, when he had squandered all our property, he was one night shot dead at a ball, for paying too much attention to a married lady. His propensity for flirting never left him, and was the cause of his death. I have become reduced to what you see me."

Josie attended to the poor creature until she died, and the evening after her death,

the Mother Superior's prayers were longer than usual; and we may readily aver that she fervently returned thanks to the kind Father who had spared her the terrible fate which once awaited her as the wife of Paul Mar.

Louis Lafourche will never return to America, and learn, when only too late, of his sister's fate.

In a foreign land roams a weary wanderer, impatiently awaiting the summons of death. Miserable, wretched as the poor stranger is, that is all that was once the noble, talented Gerald Clifton. Far from his native land he still wanders, seeking in continual change oblivion of the past.

The next day after Marie Adrian's death, the following notice appeared in the local column of a city paper: —

"Last night, a man calling himself Joe Brown (but who was supposed to have once been a person of some respectability), was killed in a low den of infamy in Philip Street. As no one came to claim the body,

it was this morning placed in a pauper's coffin, and interred at the city's expense."

Thus, upon the same night, had Jean Luzerne and his victim entered the presence of their God. But, oh, under how different circumstances!

Julie De Bourghe and Ned Murray, who, upon the breaking up of the war, had returned to New Orleans, still live to pollute God's fair earth with their loathsome presence.

Josie De La Tour, Father S——, and Father Francis, are yet faithful laborers in their Master's vineyard.

And now, O reader, my task is done. Together we have journeyed over the span of a life; and I lay my humble tribute upon the altar of your magnanimity, only praying you to be lenient in your criticisms; and ever remember, it is not a sweet bouquet I have gathered for you, from the flowery fields of romance, but only a WOMAN'S HISTORY.

L'ENVOI!

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